"GENTLEMEN, THE PRESS!"

Chronicles of a Crusade

(Official history of the National Union of Journalists)

BY

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THIS book, a sheaf of treasured memories, is offered in gratitude and goodwill as a salutation to all who have given, are giving, and will yet give, their strength and service to the advance of British Journalism and the well-being of its workers.

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FOREWORDS

By GEORGE H. LETHEM

(One of the Founders of the Union; President, 1908-9-10; Hon. General Treasurer, 1912-16.)

THERE are no doubt still a few of the older members who, like myself, can remember the formation of the National Union of Journalists and recall more or less clearly the difficulties and disappointments that had to be overcome before it could be built up into an effective trade union adapted to the needs of working journalists. But, because of the lapse of time, the beginnings are hidden from the majority of present-day members in the mists of far-off days, so that the problems of the pioneers, different in many respects from those with which the Union is now confronted, cannot be understood or their importance appreciated without re-statement and explanation.

It is therefore fortunate that a detailed and carefully-documented history has been compiled by one of the Elder Brethren who combines practical knowledge of its earlier and later stages with trained selective and descriptive ability and love of the principles on which the Union is based. Mr. Mansfield's task has been heavy and complicated. For the earlier chapters it has involved long and close search for, and study of, documents, and the assimilation of information and recollections provided by members in response to carefully-framed questionnaires; while, for the work as a whole, there has been much searching of minutes and other records.

That the whole of this great and protracted work has been done by Mr. Mansfield as a labour of love, without fee or reward other than the joy of accomplishment and of service, adds to its value and should secure for him the grateful thanks of all members of the Union, present and to come.

LEEDS. September, 1942.

By A. KENYON

(President of the N.U.J. and of the International Federation of Journalists of Allied or Free Countries, 1943.)

JOURNALISTS will welcome this book as a careful record of their trade union movement from 1906 (before the actual foundation in 1907) right through to the Annual Delegate Meeting in 1943. I believe the general public also will find much of interest in it as a piece of the social history of our time. The book tells of our chief policies, with glimpses of the men who moulded them, and shows how present policy and outlook have evolved.

Mr. Mansfield writes for an expert public. I have no doubt their verdict will be that he has made a splendid job of it, alike in the selection and handling of his material and in his judicial assessment of personalities. All working journalists, whatever their place in the profession, owe something to the Union, to its founders and to those who are carrying it on, in whatever capacity. This book is their book, and should be on every journalist's shelf.

HARROGATE. *September*, 1943.

By the same Author :—
The COMPLETE JOURNALIST (Pitman 12/6)
SUB-EDITING (Pitman 10/6)

PREFACE

WHY not write a history of the Union? It ought to be done. I am one of the original band and can do it. I have the leisure and the inclination. Shall I attempt it? Very few of the pioneers are left and time flies."

Such had been my musings when J. W. T. Ley wrote in the *Journalist:* "I wish Mansfield would write our history." Conscience began to stir. Then Tom Foster wrote me that if I did not do it nobody would. The call became imperative. Many said that nobody could do it better. Literally that meant that the other 7,431 members might conceivably do it as well. But one or two went farther and urged that I was the best man to tackle the Titanic task!

Who could resist? This book is the result. It has meant arduous work. More than once the pen has had to be dropped when a bomb registered a "near miss." But it has been a real joy, an honour and a privilege to render one more service to a cause very near my heart. The Executive gave its imprimatur and I have striven to be worthy of the commission. My careful aim has been to avoid all prejudices and be true to the facts.

Several colleagues, whose names are mentioned in the text, have helped with fact, advice and criticism, and I am grateful; for an essential file of the *Clarion* I am indebted to Mr. S. Hancock, of Leytonstone. We have been fortunate in finding a publisher to issue the book in difficult times. When I started research three years ago I thought of a post-war book, but was urged by friends to produce earlier for the sake of our members in the Services who might like to have such a link with home, and in readiness for demobilisation and re-settlement when the story of the Union would be needed for newcomers into journalism. Ley wrote: "Bring it out as soon as you can; hang it all, you and I both want to handle the book in our lifetime." It saddens me to record that he has passed on and will not realise his wish. Owing to danger of bomb and fire all the manuscript was prepared either in duplicate or triplicate for storage in more than one place. In all this work I have received valuable assistance from my wife.

Scarcity of paper prevents the complete fulfilment of my plan. There is a bundle of "overmatter" which may some day find

place in a second or supplementary edition. Included are chapters on education, the constitution of the Union, its finance and benefits, the organisation of the free lances within the Union, the linage problem, and the Union organ. I also wanted to print several statistical tables and existing agreements. All who desire information about the latter can get it from branch officials or the head office, 7, John Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C.1. One special regret, in which every journalist will share, is that it is impossible to provide what I much desired, a topical heading for every page. We have done the best we could within the limits of "austerity" printing.

Once T. S. Dickson, whose early death was a great loss to the Union, had a delightful fancy which he thus expressed: "If, for a day, the Union itself could assume the power and personality of a human entity, and with voice or pen tell the plain tale of its birth and its service to our craft, forgetting nothing, omitting nothing, surely that autobiography of a Union would put the need for propaganda for ever beyond the duty of its beneficiaries." If I may thus treat the Union as a friend I would repeat the lines in which Wordsworth, in his "Prelude," spoke to his friend Coleridge:

> Nor will it seem to thee, O Friend! so prompt
> In sympathy, that I have lengthened out
> With fond and feeble tongue a tedious tale.
> Meanwhile, my hope has been that I might fetch
> Invigorating thoughts from former years.

F. J. MANSFIELD.

WORTHING.
September, 1943.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED.

A.D.M.—Annual Delegate Meeting.
A.J.A.—Australian Journalists' Association.
C.N.—Central News.
Ex. Tel.—Exchange Telegraph Company.
E.C.—Executive Council.
F.O.C.—Father of Chapel.
F.P.W.—Federation of Professional Workers.
I.F.J.—International Federation of Journalists.
Institute—Institute of Journalists.
J.I.C.—Joint Industrial Council.
L.S.C.—London Society of Compositors.
L.N.A.—London News Agency.
L.N.P.A.—London Newspapers Provincial Association.
M.O.I.—Ministry of Information.
Natsopa—National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants.
N.C.C.L.—National Council for Civil Liberties.
N.E.C.—National Executive Council.
N.P.A.—Newspaper Proprietors Association.
N.S.—Newspaper Society.
N.U.J.—National Union of Journalists.
"Nujjer"—Colloquial for member of the N.U.J.
N.U.T.—National Union of Teachers.
P. & K.T.F.—Printing and Kindred Trades Federation.
P.A.—Press Association.
T.A.—Typographical Association—S.T.A., Scottish ditto.
T. & P.—Trade and Periodical Branch.
T.U.C.—Trades Union Congress.
W.D.F.—War Distress Fund.
W.E.A.—Workers' Educational Association.
Courtesy titles, such as "Mr.," are used only for non-members of the Union.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST BATTLE FRONT.

Men at sometime are masters of their fates;
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
"Julius Caesar."
For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded.—Nehemiah IV., 18.

IN the first decade of this century an experiment of high consequence to the body politic of journalism was hazarded by a few daring spirits. It was nothing less than a call to the workers to form themselves into a trade union, in what was politely called a profession, but what in fact was an art and craft that yielded many of its rank and file nothing more, and often something less, than the subsistence of menial labour. There was already in existence the Institute of Journalists, concerned with professional status and dignities, legal rights and benevolence. The new movement was a challenge to the current conception of the standing and rights of working journalists. They were in some sense public servants, and moved in their communities in the unsatisfying halo of that Fourth Estate apostrophised by Burke. Even the humblest wielder of the pen in the small town must have seen on reflection the irony of maintaining such pretensions on a wage of thirty shillings or less a week. To these starveling scribes scattered all over the country came the call to fight for economic justice. The first zealots were honest enough not to disguise the real nature of their aims, and to call their movement the National Union of Journalists—a society that was a union in the full signification of the word. Their wisdom, as well as their honesty, has been vindicated by experience. The prolonged struggle to build a foundation worthy to uphold the practice and repute of the profession of journalism has had results more comprehensive and substantial than ever figured even in the dreams of the founders. It is the purpose of this book to record how this has come to pass, amid the varying fortunes which seem to be the lot of every progressive policy. It is true of those who began the work, as well as of those who carried it

forward, that they builded better than they knew. What an inspiration, what a reward, it would be to pioneers who have passed on, to survey all that has been gained—to behold a body of 7,500 Union members grown from the first thousand of the Foundation Conference of 1907 !

Compared with the ancient professions of law and medicine, journalism is a recent growth. It is little more than 300 years old in England, reckoning from the date at which the first real newspaper was started. But few chapters in history present a spectacle of greater vicissitudes than those which record the fortunes of the men who followed in the steps of the writers of ballads in the 16th century, the news letter writers who collected their stories in old St. Paul's, the Exchange and the coffee houses, and the coranto-coiners of the time of James the First, the immediate fore-runners of those printer-journalists who began the first news-papers of established periodicity. A consideration of the meaning and potentiality of the foundation of the National Union, which was a big event in the evolution of journalism itself, calls up a picture of all that was achieved by the generations of writers, humble and distinguished, who helped to build the British Press. It would be a fascinating task, were it possible, to sketch the character of the personnel of journalism from the pioneers down to those who responded to the rallying call of the Union in 1906-1907. Much could be gleaned from histories and biographies, which make quite a library in themselves. The whole impression gained from such a study is that journalists down the ages have always been a struggling class, whose services to the community it has been the fashion of some speakers to extol, but whose material rewards, social status, and public repute (or disrepute) have in the main been but a meagre recognition of their skill and the risks they often ran in the discharge of their duty. When journals of all kinds were a public nuisance or danger, in the eye of authority, their printers and "authors" (prototypes of the journalists of to-day), who dared to say anything of point about State affairs or personages, went in constant fear of the Fleet, the pillory or even of Tyburn. Defoe protested against the reproach of mercenary motives hurled at public writers—"We do justice for money, that is we do right and take our fees—our poor three halfpence." He was speaking of the men who wrote for a living, the Grub Street fraternity, and not of the bishops, dukes and statesmen who did a little free-lancing of their own surreptitiously in the periodicals.

The 18th century saw a sensible improvement in the status of the journalist, owing to the superior work of essayists like Addison and Steele, and of a Parliamentary reporter of the calibre of Samuel Johnson. But the pay remained poor. Johnson wrote the "Preliminary Discourse to the *London Chronicle*, Jan. 1, 1757," which would fill a solid column in a modern paper, and for this he got only one guinea. Nevertheless young men of writing proclivities have always been attracted to journalism during the three centuries in which the newspaper and periodical have run their course. Even those who aimed at a loftier walk in life used journalism as an avenue either to the proper world of letters or to the Inns of Court. Hence we find a scrivener of Westminster Hall, to wit one Pecke, writing in the first diurnals, and thus furnishing a precedent to budding barristers in our own memory who turned to the Press for an income in briefless days. Primitive journals were not serious literature, any more than the bulk of newspaper contents are to-day, and there was a wide social gap between the Court Laureate and the poetaster of the ballad. There survived, even within the limits of journalism itself, big distinctions of rank. Fleet Street bore the palm, and the provinces, apart from a few papers of national note, stood on a lower plane of credit and salary. There is a wide gulf, to take the extremes, between the editor of *The Times* and the local reporter at Nether Backwash, although both can claim to be journalists.

It is easy to realise how formidable was the task of the new Union in setting out to convince the mass of working journalists, in all their wide range of talent, salary and ideals, that the unity of all was essential to the economic wellbeing of each. Yet that, in effect, was the basic idea of the Union. If such a daring proposal had been made in the early days of the 19th century how could that unity have been hoped for in such a miscellany of writers as Coleridge, Hunt, Lamb and Hazlitt at the top and the hacks of Grub Street at the bottom ? But the venture of 1907 was scarcely less audacious. The great hope lay in the rank and file of "working journalists"—a makeshift definition intended to cover the real craftsmen and servitors of the profession, and not to mean by implication that the others were in any sense idlers. Primarily the distinction drawn was that of economic interest, between the wage-earner on the one side, and on the other, the wage payer, i.e., the proprietor, the director, and the manager who acted in their behalf. As our national economy is organised employers and employed sit appropriately

on opposite sides of the table (unless it is of the round type which sometimes figures in negotiations), and the employed class, whether in receipt of big salaries or little, have a fundamental identity of interest. Here the Union had a trump card, which has been not unskilfully played in its history.

Serious obstacles have, however, had to be overcome in the temperament and outlook of journalists. The profession is recruited in the most haphazard fashion from all sorts and conditions of youths and men—not to mention the women who have entered the ranks in greatly increasing numbers, and who have been treated by the Union on a footing of complete equality with the men. So many "drift" into journalism, to use a familiar but objectionable phrase. Some day the way will be clear for the Union to tackle the problem of a recognised and regular method of entry, and then it is to be hoped that the "drift" will become the "draft." The door of entry has been open to anyone with the urge to get on a newspaper staff. Often the aspiring tape boy or the messenger has got in, and by native ability has made good. Innate in many was a sense of pride in joining the "gentlemen of the Press." If they were poor they were proud. This dominant feeling produced a loyalty, a willingness to endure extremes of toil, which has been of enormous value to the employers. From the Union point of view it was in some ways a barrier to the achievement of the economic unity of journalists as a class of workers. Since the Union came into being the changes in the structure of the newspaper industry caused by the disappearance of the old family ownerships, the development of the combines and the intrusion of financiers in the seats of control, have wrought significant innovations. This revolution, together with the growing acceptance of Union economics, has largely broken down the barrier to which allusion has been made. Some leaders of journalism in recent times have bluntly told us that we are no longer a profession, but a trade, a branch of commerce, although, of course, newspapers have always had to make a living for their owners. But now that the huge capital required for modern papers is found by the issue of great blocks of shares to the public at large, it is clear that the earning of dividends is the primary object. Over a century ago Coleridge declared in his "Biographis Literaria" that, to put it plainly, the "profession of literature" was more correctly the "trade of authorship."

To return to the psyche of the journalist, another factor in

the problems which faced the Union was the individualism which so powerfully inspired the workers. In its higher ranges, journalism is creative and the fight for laurels meant the assertion of the individual and not the reign of co-operation. There were no inflexible standards of salaries and conditions such as existed in other trades, notably the printers and mechanical workers with whom journalists were associated in the production of the newspaper, and monetary success was the fruit of individual enterprise. This has to be qualified by a recognition of the spirit of good fellowship and mutual helpfulness which prevailed in the ranks. A journalist in difficulty could often rely on the assistance of a "comrade," a *fidus Achates*, to help him out. Such action was subject to one over-riding rule, never to "let the paper down." A reporter on the trail of a story, a sub-editor grappling with a long and complicated job of work, were equally endued with a quite remarkable loyalty to their paper, and even the bond of fellowship with colleagues could not be allowed to sanction the breach of a rule which had almost the force of a religion.

The professional idea was allied to all this, and one of the criticisms which the Union had to meet was the objection to fixed salary standards as productive of mechanical mediocrity. The effective reply was that merit would always obtain its reward in advances above the minimum scales fixed as bases below which it was unfair that any should work. Union argument prevailed over the showy but unsubstantial advocacy of a vague status minus a solid basis on which to support it. All very nice and agreeable to have the toast of "The Press" honoured at the mayoral banquet, but what about the money with which to buy the dress suit ? Gradually the minds of journalists were cleared on these matters by the propagation of Union doctrines, but in 1907 a vast field of work lay ahead. In his Memoirs Sir Wemyss Reid (1842-1885) has this picture of the Victorian arena—"The Press, at all events in provincial towns, was the reverse of respectable in the eyes of the world, and surely there was some reason for the low esteem in which it was held. The ordinary reporter on a country paper was generally illiterate, was too often intemperate and was invariably ill-paid." He lamented the poor rewards and dubious respectability of the newspaper career. Much of this may be admitted, but personal knowledge leads me to make large reservations. As a "junior" I used to note with admiration, for instance, the work of the men of the Press

Association general staff when they accompanied some statesman on a speaking tour in my district. Notable among them was Walter Hepburn, of whom it was said that no Gladstone visit would be complete without him. The Grand Old Man, speaking of the work of pressmen in relation to politics, referred to Hepburn as "my esteemed friend." Not so long before that a reporter was described as "an eavesdropper, an interloper, a low fellow who takes notes in secret, apologises in public and narrowly escapes being flung into the Thames." Against this may be set the undoubted fact that the struggle of the Press for the right to report the proceedings of Parliament sent the credit of the newspapers with the public up with a bound—so much so that one writer claimed that the reporter had become no inconsiderable figure in the national life.

One or two further characteristics of the journalist remain to be mentioned. First his Bohemianism, a modernised survival of early days of "starvation and revelry, pathos and recklessness, despair and constant endeavour." A rare manifestation of its spirit was shown by Mark Supple, of the *Morning Chronicle*, under the editorship of "Aberdeen" Perry. Having dined generously at Bellamy's he took his seat in the Commons Gallery, and, tempted by a pause in the debate, he shouted for "a song from Mr. Speaker." The House was paralysed and then, led by Pitt, joined in a roar of laughter. The journalistic Bohemians of those days almost rivalled Theodore Hook in the practical joke line. T. McDonald Rendle, in a chapter on "The Press in Bohemia," records in lightsome vein how the London Press Club was founded as a refuge for journalists who missed the last tram or 'bus to Brixton and had some hours to pass away. He ventures the sly hint that the newspaper proprietors were a trifle shy of it at first, thinking perhaps that it was a camouflage for a new trade union or something equally dreadful! G. A. Sala, the Bohemian *par excellence* in the period of the frock coat and top hat, presided at the opening dinner of the Club. Incidentally Rendle comments on how the business of running a club revealed something lacking in the qualities of pressmen—"Journalists, that is to say real journalists, the men who write, are rarely a commercial success. They may compose excellent articles, leading or misleading as the case may be, yet you would not choose one of them to run a cough-drop factory or an oil and colour works." Possibly not, but the Union has contrived to get some good men to conduct its business affairs.

Another indictment of the journalistic "make-up," framed within the fold by the provinces against Fleet Street, was at one time based on the alleged vice of snobbery in the attitude of the higher ranks. If Fleet Street had its "princes," Manchester, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Leeds and Glasgow had their "aristocrats." Although it was a petulant accusation, arising from the feeling among weekly newspaper men that their concerns were being neglected, it was a healthy sign that the Union was deep in practical politics and was being taken very seriously. The provincial men themselves did not escape the suspicion of snobbery. Philip Snowden, an old member, when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1929 spoke at a dinner given in his honour and dealt faithfully with the attitude of journalists to trade unionism. He admired the optimism of W. N. Watts, the prime mover in starting the Union, but confessed that to him it seemed almost impossible to unite journalists in a trade union. "In those days," he said, "working journalists were like a good many other workers who belonged to the non-manual labouring classes and believed that they were rather superior to those who worked without a collar. Of all the changes that have taken place in the last twenty years none has been more remarkable than the disappearance of snobbery and the merging of classes." I cannot close this discursive sketch of the character and outlook of journalists more fitly than by quoting the historic leading article in the *Manchester Guardian* which bade welcome to the Annual Delegate Meeting of the Union at Manchester in 1910. I think I can see in it the work of that brilliant writer, C. E. Montague. Here is an extract:

> Every one knows the conventional journalists of Victorian imaginative literature, the Shandons, Sargents, Warringtons and the rest, and there is no reason to suppose that they were anything but typical of their profession in their extreme remoteness from much of what is suggested in the very name of a National Union of Journalists. That kind of ideal of a career consisting largely of picturesque emergencies was all very well for romance, and even, perhaps, in reality for a few persons lucky or gifted enough to afford themselves the luxury of conscious adventurousness . . . There is every reason to hope that, with the National Union's aid, a gradual change which has long been going on in the English journalist's habitual attitude towards his own career will be conducted smoothly and safely to a completion by which both journalists and journalism will gain much more than they have lost by the decay of the old tradition of almost studied unpracticality.

Although the Union had to contend with suspicion, fear and hostility, arising from traditional notions, it had a potent appeal

as a courageous rally against intolerable evils which were sufficient in themselves to incite men of any spirit to a crusade of emancipation. What was the contemporary scene? A bare recital of the facts must excite the wonder and indignation of the young men who to-day reap the fruits of the Union's long campaign. It was indeed a sorry spectacle of a so-called profession impotent in the grip of adversity and oppression. Stories of those days will be found here and there in these chapters, notably in the account of the Union's prolonged dispute with the *Yorkshire Herald*, but some little detail is appropriate here as an explanation of the Union's *raison d'etre*. First I will note how the National Executive of the Union viewed the position in the year after foundation. In their search for cases in which they might properly intervene they found that excessively low salaries prevailed alike in rural areas, in residential and market towns of the South and West, and in the industrial centres of the Midlands and the North. This applied not only to the weekly papers; some of the worst cases were found on fairly important dailies. There was a danger in the growing number of apprentices, who formed in many instances a large proportion of the total staffs employed. They worked for little or nothing and when "out of their time" were willing to stay on at extremely low wages. Thus the position of seniors was rendered less secure, and the ability of proprietors to get work done at cheap rates tended to bring down the general standard of remuneration. There was much anxiety about this excessive boy labour, and in the case of a northern evening paper action was seriously contemplated; it had four youths and seven seniors, including a "working editor." With regret the Executive declared that until the formative stage of the Union was passed and strength and prestige were gained it would be futile to attempt any direct action in the great majority of cases. By such laments it was sought to strengthen timid and weak-kneed members.

The Sussex and Surrey Branch suffered from very poor conditions, but emphasised the need of getting the largest possible number of members into the Union before taking any action. The feeling that more harm than good would be caused by any aggressive step was widely shared throughout the young and still feeble body. Yet wages as low as 25/- and 30/- per week for competent daily reporters prevailed in many areas, with the accompaniment of excessive hours, the lack of any leisure, inadequate scales of expenses, and the imposition of non-journalistic duties. A paper in a large northern town, run without profit

for political purposes, had a sub-editor at 30/- and reporters at at 22/6d. or 25/- per week. Leeds had asked for a census of salaries as a basis of action, but the Executive felt " that it would be almost impossible to compile adequate statistics of this kind, for obvious reasons." To reveal salary was still regarded by many as a breach of privacy or etiquette, and others were either ashamed or afraid to do it. In fact it needed much trade union education before any thing like wages schedules could be obtained.

A " human document " in the *Journalist* in 1929 showed that the writer got 30/- a week as a reporter on a provincial daily, for which he had to work 12 to 15 hours a day, and do a job on Sundays. (Now a reporter on the same class of paper, he interposed, got £5 to £6 for a 48-hour week). The office was so mean in the matter of expenses that they cut off pence put down for tram fares, because the place was within walking distance. A week's holiday was the most allowed and money was inadequate for a seaside visit. With a note of irony he added that there was security of tenure in those days until the paper died, when the staff found themselves on the street, without a Union to fall back on. " What a pious horror we 30/- a week men had of anything savouring of trade unionism. We were even less tolerant of it than the modern journalist is of Communism. To have suggested at an Institute meeting agitating for an eight-hour day would have brought on yourself the execration of your fellow members." There was the painful case of a reporter on an evening paper in the Eastern Midlands. A married man with a young family, he had to supplement his wages by delivering his paper from door to door to get the commission, and to canvass for advertisements. His sole personal expenditure was fourpence a week for an ounce of tobacco. (Yes, fourpence for what in 1943 is 2/4d.) In many instances the wives helped to get a bare living by work of various kinds or running a little shop. At a Union dinner Lord Riddell, one of our best friends among proprietors, spoke of the time when a chief reporter had 28/- a week on which to keep up his position and wear a tall hat. Relatively things were not so very much better in some London offices. In the early days of the *Star* T. P. O'Connor employed G. B. Shaw as assistant leader writer and in his memoirs he mentions increasing G. B. S's salary from £2/10/0 as leader writer to £3/3/0 as music critic.

There was much that was rotten in the state of our Denmark when at the same period a prominent proprietor in the North could say to a group of reporters in his office: " If you are not

satisfied get out. I can get hundreds like you for thirty bob a week." The *Daily News* was then the recognised medium of Press advertisements, and the fashion was to ask applicants for jobs to state salary required. To be sure that I am not drawing a fanciful picture of degradation, by giving only the worst cases, I cull a few samples of those advertisements—Commencing salary for a young man in a Fleet Street office 30/- weekly; reporter cyclist (a popular combination then), country district, 25/-; smart reporter for Irish daily, knowledge of musical and theatrical criticism, 35/-; experienced descriptive and verbatim reporter for provincial daily, good address, 37/-, specimens of notices of music, drama and art asked for; for a Yorkshire weekly, a thoroughly qualified reporter for district and town, knowledge of football, correct proof reviser, 30/-, "only young men with modern ideas need apply." In Scotland things were even worse. A Glasgow weekly paid 22/6d. to 25/-, for which a man had to be efficient in reporting, sub-editing, and proof reading, to lend a hand in canvassing, work long hours and take a holiday without pay.

The kindly soul of Watts was roused to burning indignation by his own experiences of these humiliations in the Lancashire he knew so well. He used to tell his better-placed colleagues in Manchester, when he was urging them to action, of a young reporter with an invalid wife and a dead child. He had been refused further medical aid for his wife because he already owed money to the doctor, and he could not even afford an undertaker to bury his child. He felt that he could not appeal to the parish, because it would be a disgrace to his honourable and respectable calling, and so he asked Watts for his advice. Watts, of course, helped him out of his trouble—long afterwards it came out that the help was given from his own slender resources. The young man recovered and became an ornament to his profession. The moral preached by Watts was that such hard cases would multiply unless journalists aroused themselves and fought together to stamp out the possibility. He went a stage further and got in a home thrust to those in secure and comfortable billets. If they wanted to keep those good times and excellent conditions intact they must organise against encroachment from outside, and he reinforced this by citing instances in his own knowledge of men who had offered to work in Manchester for less than the prevailing rates of salary.

Watts's earlier work had taken him to North-East Lancashire, where the conditions were hardly credible to men whose good fortune it was to be placed in offices that were a model to the provinces. He told of men, called journalists and fully qualified, whose earnings were less than £1 a week of very long hours. Bitter stories they were, of young men sometimes of good education though generally self-taught, who had dreaded the atmosphere of mill or factory and the interminable turmoil of industrial conditions, and had sought to become what came to be called "black-coat workers," mostly respectable, but inevitably poor. The delusion of these men (said Watts) was that they would rise, not by their own efforts but through belonging to an honoured profession—"a weak-kneed, milk-and-water crowd who will bring you all to their level if you don't safeguard yourselves." The suburbs of London were just as bad. If you went there you were warned to be ready to live in a hovel and wear shoddy. One extreme and fantastic case was an office in the south-east, where things were so intolerable that few reporters could face them. No fewer than 120 reporters passed through it in procession within two or three years. The record short stay was three days, after which the victim disappeared. In that district there was talk of the need of a National Reporters' Society, run on trade union lines.

It was not surprising that when at length a conference was held for southern men a somewhat stunted ideal was held out, for almost any change would be an improvement on such an inferno. One of the advanced spirits confessed that it was a shock to him to find such a "dreadful modesty" in the expectations of the sufferers. The highest aim of most was a minimum of 50/- per week, with possibly £3 for sub-editors. Some with a little more vitality exclaimed "For Heaven's sake have a better conceit of yourselves."

It would be possible to quote many further illustrations of shameful conditions in places north, south, east and west, of which I have personal recollections or authentic details from others, but it is unnecessary. Enough has been adduced to show the compelling forces which accounted for the genesis of the National Union. It is no doubt true that many men who were paid these starvation wages were not fit to be in the profession, and that many local papers found it difficult to pay their way. This was evident to the men of vision who became the pioneers, but the aim of the wisest, who took the long view, was to promote

the uplift of journalism as a whole and to make it a worthier profession for all engaged in it.

It will be seen that the Union's major "offensive" (to use a word with which great wars have made us unhappily familiar) was opposed to the ingrained prejudice of the journalist against trade unionism as applied to what he fondly regarded as his profession. This issue has provided, in the perspective of Union history, our main controversy and our most effective development. The objective of the founders was to create a team spirit in a body of workers which tended to be separatist rather than unionist. The story of how the great contention proceeded, and how it culminated in an alliance with the printing and other trade unionists in the newspaper industry in 1919, is told in my chapter on "Affiliations." By a significant coincidence that year also saw the formation of the Joint Industrial Council, at first intended for the general printing trade, but later widened to cover the newspaper trades as well, and something is said in the proper place of the valuable and constructive work of that body. Speaking broadly newspaper trade unionism has had a comparatively quiet record, undisturbed by the great conflicts which have been endemic in some of the big industries. One exception was the national strike of the Typographical Association in 1922, when the N.U.J. endeavoured, but not with complete success, to prevent its members from blacklegging. The alignment of unionism in the newspaper world has been watched with close interest by the Labour movement at large, and particularly the linking up of the journalists with the mechanical branches. The Labour Research Department's pamphlet "The Press" (1922) emphasised the dependence of the nation's workers on the newspapers for essential information, and concluded—"It is clear that for the Labour movement, which is the chief sufferer by the capitalist nature of the modern Press, the organisation and attitude of the newspaper printers and journalists may easily be vital."

Not only in this field of trade unionism has the printer an historic priority which may be realised by the journalist with advantage. In the primitive stages of the newspaper the printer was the real producer, and often proprietor, of the paper. This is an interesting fact and I make no apology for looking at it a little closely. We hear to-day of "one-man papers" run by a printer, sometimes mainly to promote his general printing business. There were many such in the beginning. The classic example of a journal run, though not printed, by a single journalist, was

Defoe's *Review*. No other pen was employed on it but his. Among many trades essayed by Defoe without success was that of printing. In his contributions to the periodicals of Mist and Applebee, Defoe always wrote of the printers as the responsible "journal men." There is a reference in one letter to Applebee's to the tribulations of his "brother typographers" and their papers. When Crabbe wrote his poem "The Newspaper" in 1785 he pictured the pangs of writers who found no favour in the printer's regards, and no place in his paper. The prominent notice the poet gave to the printer was due to the fact that then the functions of printer, proprietor and editor, were frequently centred in the same man. If a feeling of caste, which has been denounced as a vice of the modern journalist, existed at that time it must have been entertained by the printer and not the "scribbler" of whom Crabbe sang. We must remember that journalists were mainly party hacks paid by the politicians, and employed by the printers. But the latter, as writers, sometimes shared the "swag." Thus W. Wilkins, printer of the *London Journal*, in 1734-5 was minuted at the Treasury as receiving £1,486 5s. of the King's money for journals delivered to the Post Office, and this included £266/13/4 "for writing."

Going back to the birth of printing, Caxton was a literary man, who produced 64 books from his own press in the Almonry at Westminster, some of which were written by himself. There is, of course, a distinction to be remembered between the master printer and the journeyman, but the former seems to have been generally master of his craft. A famous family of printers, the Woodfalls, hold a place of honour in the history of journalism. H. S. Woodfall was owner, editor and printer of the *Public Advertiser*, in which the Letters of Junius appeared. His brother William started the *Morning Chronicle* as a rival to that paper. Then there was Edward Cave, printer, of St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, who founded and edited the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Nathaniel Butter, who was both a printer and a "transcriber of books," brought out the first serial English newspaper in 1622, the *Weekly Newes*. A writer of news letters, he conceived the idea of a regular journal and became a news printer. For 100 years all letters were addressed to the printer, and then "to the author," confirming the fact that the printer was for a long time the ostensible director of the paper. Again, the first English daily, the *Daily Courant*, was started by Samuel Buckley, described in the House of Commons as its "writer and printer." An

Amsterdam printer started this country in the coranto line. Neither leading article (in our sense) nor editor existed in the times here reviewed: the printer employed a literary person to look over the proofs. There is in vigorous existence an important provincial newspaper, the *Birmingham Gazette*, which is an excellent illustration of my point. It was started in 1741 by a London printer, Thomas Aris, when Birmingham was a "hardware village" of less than 25,000 people. Robert Rintoul, who printed the *Dundee Advertiser* and then for years edited it, came to London to found the *Spectator* in 1828, and to earn the title of "printer-journalist."

There are, however, more famous examples. When the *Manchester Guardian* was founded as a weekly paper in 1821 it was "printed and published by J. Garnett," who performed the duties of printer, business manager and reporter. Without transcribing his own shorthand notes he set his reports in type, and on the day of publication he took off his coat and turned the handle of the press. He served his apprenticeship to printing at Barnsley and became a sturdy champion of the rights of the Press. The other example is *The Times*, founded by John Walter, who fulfilled the double role of journalist and printer. Once, when important news came in from France at 10 a.m., the office being then empty, he translated the message, went into the case room and got on with the setting with his own hands, with the result that a second edition of the paper was issued at one o'clock. By a striking coincidence both the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Telegraph* (now merged into one) were in their early days taken over by their printers when in a derelict state—the *Post* by the brothers Stuart and the *Telegraph* by J. M. Levy. When the *Daily Herald* was started as a strike sheet in 1911 the compositors held strong views as to who should control the editor, and Mr. George Lansbury, in his story of the paper "The Miracle of Fleet Street," observes: "People who may be inclined to think this unreasonable, as I often did, must bear in mind the fact that it was the compositors and other newspaper workers who initiated the movement which resulted in the founding of the paper, and therefore their demand for control was not so unreasonable as may appear at first sight." All this is paralleled by the history of New York State, where in the period 1785-1830 the country printer was the chief agent in the development of journalism. Dr. Hamilton, who has written the story, admits that these pioneers were not as a rule adept in editorial composition, but they culti-

vated a reading public " with some modicum of taste and enjoyment for the provincial mind." With the development of newspaper organisation into greater complexity and magnitude offices had to be divided into departments, and thus the journalist became independent of the printer, but to this day the " head printer " in a big office plays an important executive role. One has only to recall books by Barrie, Philip Gibbs and others, dealing with journalistic life, to enforce this.

A consideration of these factors leads to the conviction that the printer is an essential partner in the struggles of the working journalist to improve his lot. Without doubt he furnishes an admirable pattern of sound-minded trade unionism. This found an ancient embodiment in his " chapel." As far back as 1666 there was an organisation, for in a publication entitled " The Case and Proposals of the Free Journeymen Printers in and about London," complaint was made of the multiplication of apprentices and other grievances. In 1775 there was an agreement on wages and apprenticeship between master printers and their organised workers. But modern progress dates from the formation of the London Society of Compositors and the Typographical Association in the 1840's, since when the movement has gone on steadily to its present position of firmness and stability. The logical development was the formation of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation in 1900, which includes all the crafts and trades engaged in printing and newspaper production. Now that journalists are enlisted in this alliance it is profitable to study how, when a trade union was first proposed, they began to re-act to the new gospel. That, and the gradual swing to genuine participation in trade unionism, make up a large part of this history. Honesty compels the admission that it took a long time for journalists to learn the real nature of their Union and to assess it at its proper value. Only by a slow process did they gain the habit of regarding the Union in a natural and familiar way. For a while many of them, especially those in the higher ranks who had not " gone through the mill," simply tolerated the Union as something which was animated by a good purpose but might become mischievous. To these it seemed a little *infra dig.* to talk of " my Union."

A different tale began to be told, however, when the young body got seriously down to its prime business of winning agreements with proprietors on wages and conditions. So dense had been many that they had failed to grasp the fundamental difference between Institute and Union. Once a sceptic of this order made

a public reference to a "National Institute of Journalists," which was symptomatic of a mental confusion and ignorance which died hard in some quarters. The original work of reconciling journalists to trade unionism was hard indeed. It was pictured by G. H. Lethem, the Union's second President, at the coming-of-age dinner in 1928. The founders tried to realise a dream that arose out of hard facts, and actual contact with realities. Those who dreamed of mutual help and betterment came to actuality in their decision to take the trade union line, having discovered that it could not be done in any other way. It was a most difficult thing to persuade the average journalist to regard himself as a wage-earner, and that as such he must have a union. In the process of "getting this over" some of the pioneers experienced a good deal of hardship. A Union leader (H. D. Nichols), speaking in 1931, forcibly summed up the position in these words: "the trouble when we first organised was that we were a middle-class sort of gang, with no tradition of trade-unionism born into us. When the pioneers started the Union they had to start from the beginning, as there was none of that inborn feeling. In the new generation of members, however, there were the first signs of that sort of tradition being a real thing and beginning to count. This was a tremendous advantage, for it was taken as a matter of course that journalists must join their trade union as soon as possible." A graphic little sketch of the environment in which the Union was started has been supplied by W. H. Holliday, a veteran colleague who was at the inaugural meeting in Manchester in 1906:

The N.U.J. was born in a doleful atmosphere of strikes, lock-outs and general industrial disturbances. The trade unions, and also those who had not learned of the benefits of collective bargaining, but only knew of the crude weapon of strikes plus mob violence, were constantly involved in trouble and strife. Lancashire was a veritable hotbed of industrial tumults of the most vicious and sinister kind. There were strikes in the cotton mills, the mines, the docks and shipyards, early in the century, and although the strikers sometimes won concessions it was at a terrible cost of actual starvation among the participants. It happened also that when a lock-out succeeded it meant almost the ruin of a particular industry. When the strikers won there was naturally an impetus towards unionism, and possibly it was the influence of one of these rallies that stimulated a similar spirit among the journalists of Lancashire. They were a hard-headed clear-thinking body of men who first conceived the idea of the N.U.J., but their efforts caused considerable amusement, mingled with not a little scorn, among their kind. As the movement persisted this attitude of mind changed to resentment among those who had nurtured the idea that journalists were a class apart, following a profession which had

nothing to do with unionism of any kind, especially with that kind which was liable to link them with the violence of strikes and lock-outs. "Why should we link ourselves up with dock labourers and bricklayers?" was the cry of these opponents, who were met with the spirited response of the die-hard pioneers that, although they might be more "respectable" than these lower-classed manual workers, they were not much better paid, or even as well paid in many instances. So the argument ran at many a gathering at the Press Club in Manchester, or at the bars where newspaper men foregathered. The battle waged furiously when "Tommy" Watts, the real founder of the Union, started a revolt against the Institute, which he described as a moribund body and over-run by sycophants to the employers. Influential stalwarts of the Institute countered with a rallying cry and a recruiting campaign which had considerable success for a time, because it soon began to be noised abroad that employers in some adjacent places were getting restive under the Watts revolt and were prepared to make "concessions." The Institute men were firm in their belief that the way to meet grievances, which they suggested were largely imaginary or exaggerated, was to form a stronger Institute, but above all they insisted that the one sure way of preserving harmony in the industry was peaceful negotiation.

It is curious to think that such a controversy should have gathered way in an office to which Watts and the other stalwarts principally belonged—an office deservedly held up as a model to the provinces. The conditions in the office of the *Manchester Guardian* and its companion paper the *Evening News*, were, in fact, as ideal as they well could be. It was a common experience, for instance, for the whole staff of another northern evening paper to apply for any vacancy that rarely arose in that office. Possibly the explanation of this seeming anomaly was that there had begun to arrive in the newspaper world a new type of employer who was a business magnate first and a newspaper man a long way behind. To those who recall those days instances will leap to the mind of newspaper proprietors who knew nothing, and cared less, about editorial traditions and formulas, and who rapidly undermined the authority of the editor by the inroads of the business organisation side. That was a disturbing thing for Lancashire, where so many of the old type of proprietor survived, with all the homely family traditions of his kind, working in complete harmony with his staff of well-satisfied journalists.

The twin evils of self-satisfaction and fear were seized upon by Watts and the rest for their propaganda work, and their very remarkable zest and energy carried the day after a big struggle. An added stimulus was given to the campaign by the very real sympathy accorded to the movement by a few proprietors who understood properly its inner meaning, and who realised that a well-managed paper must have a contented staff. Bad conditions in benighted areas created cheap invaders of the decent districts. The development of the popular daily, and more especially the bigger combines, gave numerous opportunities for the home-grown reporter or sub-editor to seek his fortune further afield, and so badly paid had many of them been before that they asked for rates of pay considerably less than the recognised salaries in centres like Manchester. Thus established men in the better class offices came to feel insecure, and

to realise the force of the Union appeal, even to well-placed staffs. Many "invaders" found it difficult to get the salaries which Watts advised them to demand, and as there were then no properly established minima, these men fell to the temptation to get on to a good staff at rates a bit below those being paid. The competition started by the development of the Hulton enterprises meant the aggregation of many brilliant journalists in Manchester, which became the recognised stepping-stone to Fleet Street. Here indeed was a fruitful field for the missionary Watts and his Union idealism. The more fluid condition of the journalistic "market" meant that larger numbers of men were being influenced by the "Manchester message" which the Union pioneers were spreading around. This does not mean that the menace of cheaper labour came from the Hulton offices, which paid very good rates to attract the best men. Watts with his indomitable spade work among the waverers, and in spite of real and determined opposition of the active few who rallied the Institute forces, got Manchester to accept the idea of a Union on a national basis.

The foregoing statement anticipates somewhat the theme of the next chapter, which is concerned with the birthplace of the Union and the fine missionary zeal which set the Union going.

CHAPTER II.

UNION'S BIRTHPLACE: THE FIERY CROSS.

He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
"*Lady of the Lake*" (*Scott*).

A GREAT deal of good-natured controversy has brightened the serious work of the Union from time to time on the question of the actual starting point of the organisation. It is obviously difficult to give a definite opinion, because the whole of the necessary evidence is not available. Memories have been blurred by the passage of nearly forty years, and records in the shape of minutes and printed extracts are hard to come by. Moreover, it must be remembered that long before decisive steps were taken, journalists were talking, and even holding informal meetings, about the need of a new combination. This was occurring in various parts of the country, but, without a doubt, most effectively in the North, and Manchester became the focal point where all the rays of light and heat met. Listening to

authentic voices from that City itself doubts are resolved. Here, for instance, is an extract from a little book published by the Manchester Press Club in 1922, entitled "Fifty Years of Us: a jubilee retrospect of men and newspapers":

It has been said very many times that what Lancashire says today England will say tomorrow. With equal truth it may be said that the Manchester pressmen have often led the way to better things. They set up the first club for pressmen in this or any country (save possibly New York). Manchester's example was followed by London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Sheffield and Bristol. It was Manchester men again who took the lead in establishing a national association of journalists, for in March, 1882, a committee was appointed to consider the subject of an association of pressmen and communicate with pressmen in other towns, and suggest a scheme to be laid before the Club at the earliest opportunity. Two years later a scheme was promulgated and endorsed by pressmen throughout the nation, and at a meeting in Birmingham the National Association of Journalists was set up with Mr. H. Flint as the first president. Soon afterwards the Association blossomed into the Institute of Journalists, with a Royal Charter at its back. From this body sprang the International Congress of the Press, and later still the National Union of Journalists came into being, and set the parent body an example of how to do things.

The Union's first general treasurer, J. C. Menzies, in an article headed "Welcome home" on the occasion of the Union's Annual Delegate Meeting in Manchester in 1910, wrote: "Manchester gave the Union birth (1906), Birmingham found it a constitution (1907), Leeds fed the constitution in good hearty Yorkshire fashion (1908), London strengthened it still further (1909), and now Manchester (1910) is going to have the opportunity of seeing what a lusty youth its offspring has become." James Haslam, editor of the *Journalist*, declared in an editorial footnote in one issue: "There can be no doubt that the foundation of the Union was laid in Manchester." H. D. Nichols, in his presidential address at the Manchester A.D.M. in 1930, said that the delegates would be treading familiar ground—"familiar and in a sense sacred ground to all those whose membership goes back to earlier days. You will find in Manchester a branch of 330 members which is still proud to have what it considers the best claim to be our mother branch." When H. M. Richardson came to write some chapters of Union history he started off in this way:

Even at head office there are not complete records, and, so far as can be traced, there is no written report at all of the first meeting that was ever held. Indeed there is dispute, or at least polite difference of opinion, as to when and where the first meeting was held. Was it Watts, of

Manchester, who convened the first, or was it Betts or Mansfield at Woolwich? It is a matter of historical interest only. Whichever was the wooer, Woolwich and Manchester were soon wedded—to propagate the species of journalistic trade unions. Until cause is shown to the contrary, the present historian plumps for Manchester as being the birthplace of the Union. If the facts are against him so much the worse for the facts, for if Manchester was not the honoured place it ought to have been, since Manchester is the incubator of so many unions.

The issue could not, as far as the later historian is concerned, be left in that happy-go-lucky fashion. Careful inquiries enable me to produce some dates with precision. Everyone agrees that the idea of a union for journalists centred mainly in the personality of William Newman Watts, who in the period now under review was on the reporting staff of the *Manchester Evening News*. Any account written by him of the formation of the Union possesses authority. Fortunately such a document exists in the archives of the Union, and on a recent voyage of discovery to the head office in John Street, Bedford Row, London, this and other records were found. The office was dark, deserted and disorderly, having been evacuated after the air bombardment of London in the autumn of 1940. Piles of books and stores had been placed in the cellars and other places of hoped-for safety, and these we searched as thoroughly as possible. The Watts letter, in his own handwriting, was in a beautiful morocco binding, with other valuable relics. It was written in 1912 to Horace Sanders, one of our eager spirits in Central London at the time of the Insurance Act boom, when publicity for the young Union was called for. Twenty-two years later Sanders found the letter among his papers, had it bound and presented it to the Union Head Office, as a "very human and interesting document" from Watts' pen and "out of the abiding respect I have for his memory as a good journalist and a great fellow." Addressed to "Dear Horace," and signed "Yours ever, W. N. Watts," the letter was written in his usual genial and intimate manner:

November 28th, 1912.

In the late summer or early autumn of 1906 Frank H. Rose, a former leader writer on the *Daily Dispatch*, then a free lance and a contributor to the *Clarion*, pointed out in the latter the need of better conditions for journalists, and I think suggested a democratic organisation. He was, and is, a member of the Manchester Press Club. He discussed the matter with several of us and it was decided to hold a meeting at the Albion Hotel of those local chaps who cared to come. Rees, of Liverpool, also attended. I presided, Rose delivered a speech in which he said it would be possible to run a trade union. We all said nasty

things about various things and institutions. Billyeald, now of the *Birmingham Post*, Chalmers now lying dangerously ill, and Rees backed us up. A provisional committee was appointed with Billyeald as chairman, myself as secretary and Menzies as treasurer.

I cannot say without research whether or not we held one or two more meetings before Billyeald approached Spencer to preside at the county meeting we held. We had a number of meetings of the officials. I circularised every office in Lancashire and as many men as we knew, and then came the remarkable county meeting at the Albion, when Spencer presided and I was re-appointed Hon. Secretary *pro tem* on the motion of Jimmy Heddle. I often think of that *pro tem*. It was at that county meeting that we suggested the title of N.U.J., the N.U.T. being our model for the title.

Then I circularised every newspaper office in the country, my youngsters taking the circulars to the pillar box near home, utilising their play-wagons and barrows for the purpose. We proposed a national conference, to be held at Birmingham and well you remember the language you used on the 'phone when on my asking you to fix up the hotel you asked for my private address. "Boggart Hole Clough" got you down. [Sanders was working at Birmingham then, before his Fleet Street days.]

All the initial expenses were defrayed by collections at meetings in Manchester. We never had a meeting without a collection, and if we ran short of money I used to pass the word round the offices and the bobs would come along.

It was the Manchester men's magnificent confidence in the future and their faith in the movement that gave birth to the Union. The delegates at the first conference at Birmingham were appointed by provisional branches and each town had to raise the funds for the railway fares. We had printers who did not worry us with bills too often, but we paid everybody off out of the voluntary contributions. Then, of course, when we went on the stump we footed our own bills until the Union got going.

A few years ago I was told that at a meeting at Woolwich just before the Manchester meeting it was decided to do something in the way of a new organisation.

I have written to you more or less privately. I don't know what you want the stuff for, but if it is for publication purposes please keep me out of it. Log-rolling is not in my line.

P.S.—I cannot say without a lot of hunting up which were the first branches formed after the "Brum" meeting. Several were formed on the same day. Rose never held any official position. He declined because (privately) he thought it might be insinuated that the movement had a political tinge. He joined the Union.

The modesty of this record was characteristic of Watts, and appeals to those of us who know how, years before the move in Manchester, he was talking trade unionism to journalists in Blackburn and Darwen. An inscription in the binding of the letter reads :—"An original letter written by Mr. W. N. Watts, first General Secretary and a Founder of the National Union of Journalists, telling the story of the founding of the Union. It

was addressed to the hon. secretary of the Central London branch and became the basis of an article about the Union, which was published in the *Daily Mail* at the invitation of Lord Northcliffe, who placed a column of the leader page of the newspaper at the disposal of the Central London branch." As a matter of fact Northcliffe, who was alive to the Union as "news," invited Sanders to meet him and said: "I will give the Union a column on the leader page of the *Daily Mail*". Sanders got the facts from Watts and wrote the article and it was printed exactly as written except for one word. The phrase "trade or business of journalism" was in the copy and Northcliffe sent a message that he would prefer the word "profession." Sanders, of course, agreed, knowing Northcliffe's punctilio in regard to the promise to print the article as written.

But that is by the way. Watts' letter brings us, withal rather vaguely, to the crucial period. The *Clarion* began its campaign on July 27, 1906, and it seems probable that consultations among Manchester pressmen had prepared the ground. At any rate meetings were called ere long. The first of which I have been able to get definite details was either on October 13, 1906, or a week later. A copy received of a letter dated Nov. 7, 1906, and signed by W. N. Watts, as hon. secretary *pro tem*, states that at a meeting of Manchester journalists held on Oct. 13 a committee was appointed to draw up suggestions to be submitted to a general meeting for the purpose of carrying into effect the following resolution: "That, having in view the unsatisfactory conditions prevalent in the journalist (*sic*) profession, and the absence of any organisation competent to deal with the difficulty, this meeting of Manchester pressmen hereby declares in favour of the formation of an association of working journalists." The letter went on to convene a meeting at the Albion Hotel, Piccadilly, Manchester, on Saturday, November 17. The resolution quoted is the first of which I have been able to trace any record, but there is a curious discrepancy in dates, for in the national circular sent out by Watts in December, 1906 (which appears in a succeeding chapter) it was stated that the resolution in question was unanimously carried at a meeting on October 20. There may have been two meetings. The Oct. 13 one is described as of "Manchester journalists"; Oct. 20 as of "journalists from Manchester and surrounding districts." Possibly the City men first had a meeting and adopted the resolution, and then called a district meeting for wider support of their policy. Then came

the Albion meeting on a county basis, to which fuller reference must be made. If the question of the priority of Manchester or Woolwich in calling a meeting had to be decided, the discrepancy would have to be settled first. Inquiries made by H. T. Hamson indicate that the date of the first Woolwich meeting was Oct. 19, 1906, but only three attended. The question of actual precedence can therefore scarcely be decided. It remains a moot point. That need cause no grief, for the matter is really an academic one.

The meeting at the Albion Hotel on Nov. 17, 1906, inaugurated the national campaign, proposed a national conference to place the Union on a permanent footing as quickly as possible, and submitted a preliminary scheme for "a National Union of Journalists." This will be found in full in the national circular. H. M. Richardson attended the meeting and writing in the *Journalist* in 1925 he thus described it:

R. C. Spencer, then chief reporter of the *Manchester Guardian*, was in the chair and W. N. Watts acted as secretary, as he acted as secretary from this time until his death in 1918. The room was soon misty with tobacco smoke. Possibly there were about forty present. I seem to remember among them Charles Billyeald (then of Hultons, now of the *Birmingham Post*), J. Chalmers (then of the *Daily Mail*, Manchester, now dead), W. A. Balmforth (then chief reporter, and later editor of the *Manchester Evening News*), J. Menzies (*Manchester City News*), W. Holliday (*Manchester Evening News*), W. Thomson Hill (then of the *Daily Dispatch*, now of the *Daily Chronicle*), J. Heddle (then of the *Daily Dispatch*, now managing editor of the *Daily Sketch*), J. Haslam (then a freelance and now editor of the *Journalist*), F. H. Rose (then a freelance, now M.P. for North Aberdeen), and Fred Howarth (now of the *Evening Chronicle*, Manchester). The meeting sprang out of the general discontent with journalistic conditions, but, as has been many times said, the men who were there were well paid, for those days . . . Recently the Union has been referred to as a secessionist body and in a sense it was, since many of the movers had been members of the Institute, and had left it in despair of its ever being effective.

The names of the men who were in at the start are recorded here, as of right. Would that the list were complete. From two who are not included in Richardson's list I have received some notes about the meeting. W. H. Armitt, then of the *Daily Dispatch*, later chief sub-editor and night news editor of the *Daily News*, before returning to Manchester to become northern director of the *News Chronicle*, was there. He became chairman of the Manchester branch of the Union in succession to W. A. Balmforth, who first held the post. He writes:

We had about fifty present and some lively speeches were made. Watts insisted that the failure of the Institute to help the working journalists

was due to proprietors in membership, and he wanted only working journalists if a Union was formed. Watts, whose private life was exemplary, was anxious to have a businesslike body with no junketing at the expense of vested interests. It was said that an extra expenditure of £100 a year would make life more tolerable for two or three journalists on a country paper and for another £300 a year papers staffed by half a dozen men in provincial towns could achieve a comfortable standard.

In my youthful ardour I referred to the Institute as a moribund body in which the humble country reporter who pleaded for better conditions was overwhelmed by "disciplined battalions of reactionaries"—a phrase which tickled Watts and provoked shouts of hilarity among my colleagues. This relieved me from the necessity of explaining how a moribund institution could "overwhelm" a turning worm. To-day I must concede that the Institute has been a long time dying. Others poured scorn on the boring procedure and sententious and ponderous deliberations which seemed far removed from bread and butter problems, at the Institute meetings and conferences.

Richardson further mentioned that a few stalwart Institute people were present, men who had faith in the Institute—"if only it could be inoculated with some virile vaccine cultivated in an animal with a kick." These tried with all their eloquence to make the eager spirits pause before taking the plunge into trade unionism, "but the day for compromise and patchwork had gone by. The orientation of working journalists towards trade unionism, filled with the spirit of adventure, was definitely manifested that night. By an overwhelming majority we agreed to form a union, to spread the message through the country, to seek contact with kindred souls in the far corners of the kingdom. A few of us were appointed there and then to get on with the job."

Percy Rudd (then sports editor of the *Evening Chronicle*, Manchester, now sports editor of the *News Chronicle*) recalls that among others present at the meeting were W. Buchanan Taylor (then a reporter at Withy Grove, later of the *Sunday Chronicle* and publicity chief of J. Lyons & Co., honorary publicity adviser to the National Savings Committee, 1941-43, and chairman of Warships Weeks Publicity), and James Dunn (well known later as R. E. Corder of the *Daily Mail*.) Referring to the feeling against the Institute Rudd mentions that years before, when he was a junior reporter in Hull, he asked a veteran colleague for advice about joining that body. "My boy," he replied, "if you have any money to spare, join the Newspaper Press Fund. The Institute never did you or I any good and never will." Rudd became an active Union man. He was the first treasurer of the Manchester branch and later was chairman. He accompanied Watts on many missionary tours in Lancashire and Cheshire.

What immediately followed the meeting at the Albion is, stated Richardson, very vague, and he left to others the task of filling in the blank between it and the foundation conference at Birmingham at Easter, 1907. Those four months were undoubtedly crowded with vital work preliminary to the actual formation stage at Birmingham. Harold Moran, of Oldham, informs me that the Albion assembly appointed a small committee, including himself, to carry on the good work. In a letter dated April 19, 1941, he says:

Frank Rose, who was then a leader writer at Withy Grove, attended the first meeting of the committee, held a few days after Nov. 17, with a copy of the rules of the Engineers' Society, which in the main were adopted as the draft for our rules. The word "union" was always substituted for "society." At the meeting the title chosen was "the National Union of Journalists." We were determined if at all possible to make it a national organisation and our optimism has happily been justified. When it came to the question of where the headquarters should be, I remember W. A. Balmforth (then editor of the *Manchester Evening News*) remarking that the whole venture might break down on the question of headquarters. We fully realised that if the Union secured a substantial membership in the South a demand was sure to be made for the head office to be removed to London. Balmforth's fear of a serious rift fortunately proved to be unfounded. We, however, decided that, if only for the time being, the Union head office should be in Manchester. At that time no other decision was possible, as Watts, who retained the position of secretary, did all the secretarial work for a long time on a voluntary basis. I often wondered how he got through the tremendous amount of Union Work on top of his duties at the *Manchester Evening News*. He once told me that it was his practice to devote almost every Sunday to Union business. Each member of the Committee went about collecting money towards the formation expenses. I was then working at Rochdale, and find that on Dec. 3, 1906, we subscribed 12/6. Branches had to pay the expenses of the delegates they sent to the Birmingham Conference. That Conference did not disturb the Committee which had started the Union, but made additions to it.

The most important action of the committee, which was in fact the provisional executive, was the sending out of a national call for action in December, 1906. This had the effect of rallying support to Manchester as the natural head and centre of the movement. But other areas had developed the Union sense, and were ready for the centripetal process when the call came. A survey of these earliest happenings will now be attempted, though it can have no claim to completeness. The risings of local initiative described may be taken as examples of what was occurring in many scattered places.

Before the Manchester movement had been heard of in the West Riding the formation of a journalists' society on trade union lines had been discussed at Leeds, and G. H. Lethem had been asked to draw up a basis of rules. This he had accomplished when news of the Manchester action came and the West Riding men at once, like the few in the smaller enterprise at Woolwich, decided to join forces. The fusion spelt success. The spade work done at Leeds proved of high value when the Acorn conference assembled at Birmingham. Lethem had been a member of the Institute for many years and when he went to Leeds he attended meetings of the West Riding branch and at times advocated action as to wages and conditions which was not incorrectly described as "trade union action." A few of his Institute colleagues agreed with him and naturally the group got together and discussed what could be done. There was agreement that the Institute could not be expected to do what they thought necessary and the notion of forming a Union took shape. Then a committee was appointed with Lethem as secretary to sketch a constitution and rules. Walter Meakin was a member. This stage had been reached when a circular came from Watts telling of a similar movement in Manchester. After some correspondence, and a visit from two members of the Manchester committee, the decision for united action was taken. A provisional West Riding branch was formed, with Lethem as chairman and Alex Campbell (later editor of the *Sunday Pictorial*) as hon. secretary.

The meeting at which this was done is worth re-calling, for Leeds was an important centre and its lead was influential. Moreover, I imagine its initial difficulties were those of many another branch. Notices were sent out all over the West Riding convening the meeting at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds. A single folio of ordinary copy paper, numbered "4," found among a few early papers, is evidently the last of the draft of the notice convening the meeting. It reads:—"Kindly attend the meeting and, if possible, bring with you some other journalist to whom a direct invitation may not have been sent. The meeting has been called at an earlier hour than usual in order to give every opportunity to journalists living at a distance to attend and take part in the discussions." There were five signatures—J. R. Toplis (*Yorkshire Post*), W. Meakin (*Yorkshire Daily Observer*), G. H. Lethem (*Leeds Mercury*), A. Bostock (*Yorkshire Evening News*), and John Birch (*Harrogate Times*). Toplis presided at the meeting, Lethem acted as secretary, and there was a big attendance—from 150 to

200. The Institute was strong in Leeds then, and members were present to oppose the new movement. Two representatives of the Manchester union group attended. There was a free and open discussion and speaker after speaker prefaced or ended his remarks with a statement that " he did not wish to commit himself." This worried the Manchester men a lot. Ultimately Lethem, urged by them, got up, declared that he was going to commit himself, and moved that a provisional branch of the Union be formed. Almost without discussion this was carried by a large majority. Thus West Riding came into existence, and the branch was represented at the inaugural conference the following Easter (1907) at Birmingham.

It will perhaps be appropriate if now we turn from the West Riding to Woolwich, which has its own undeniable claim to a very early pioneering move. Before doing so, however, mention must be made of what may well be the earliest claim staked-out for a journalists' trade union. It was mentioned casually in a reminiscent speech at a Union social gathering at Torquay in May, 1930, by A. J. Rhodes, the executive member for Devon and Cornwall. Nearly 40 years ago (*i.e.*, about 1890), he said, his old friend Charles Gerry, who was still in active journalism, had the temerity at a meeting in Torquay to move that an association of journalists should be formed for Devon and Cornwall on a trade union basis, and he was nearly " hoofed " out of the room in consequence. Probably it was an Institute meeting, or perhaps a Press Fund one, but at either in those days such an idea would have been equally shocking. Even in the industrial north, nearly ten years later, Watts was taking a bold step in preaching trade unionism to journalists.

The prime mover at Woolwich was David Berry, a Radcliffe (Manchester) man then on the staff of a paper in the Arsenal town. He had taken a prominent part in correspondence in the *Clarion*, which focussed general attention on a trade union for journalists, and became an active propagandist both in and around London. In those days I was editor of the *Erith Times* (and for a while proprietor), and have a vivid recollection of Berry's keenness. My little office, quite close to Woolwich, was the scene of meetings of the small band of enthusiasts striving to get the movement going. Walter Betts, then a reporter with me, was a tower of strength. Our number was insignificant, but our record is a proud one. The first actual meeting, if it deserved that name, is said to have been held in the week before Manchester's first, and the

Erith Times staff was destined to furnish three presidents of the Union—Betts in 1931, R. S. Forsyth in 1935, and myself in 1918. Berry has written his early memories for the purpose of this history. Recalling the first moves in Manchester by Frank Rose, and his original *Clarion* articles, Berry says:

Whether he was flying a kite for the Manchester journalists, or merely used this as a fill-in holiday subject, I cannot say, but when I met him for the first time in the Manchester Press Club some weeks later (when I was up home on holiday) in the company of W. N. Watts, I found him tremendously elated at the success of his article — apparently more successful than he had dreamed. He and Watts seemed to be close friends and had apparently talked over the subject together for some time. At any rate Watts, like myself, was at that time keen and active, and was going ahead with the promotion of a Manchester branch, while I was doing the same with the South-East London (Woolwich) branch. Watts was a much older man than myself, a heavy worker, and a quiet enthusiast, with a sound practical mind. I remember him telling me that all provisional entrants from the staffs of the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Manchester Evening News* had shown their faith in the movement by paying a year's subscription in advance. In the discussion in the *Clarion* I gave my reasons why I considered it hopeless to expect any new journalists' movement to start from Fleet Street, and I urged that Manchester (the suburbs of which I had left only about two years before) offered the best chance of a successful start. I knew the feeling in Manchester and the part Manchester had played in trying to make the Institute a more practical instrument for improving the economic position of the working journalist.

In his leader in the *Clarion* A. M. Thompson suggested that "Lancastrian in London" (my pseudonym) should make a start in London, and that Rose and his friends should do likewise in Manchester, as I had proposed. This exhortation induced me to make an early start, and I heard later from Watts that Manchester had done the same. To the best of my recollection, I called my first meeting a week before he did his in Manchester, but at such a time a few days one way or the other did not matter. It was the spirit of cohesion, enough for a sound start, that was vital. In those days I was an ardent enthusiast for anything that savoured of social and economic reform, and I sometimes wish that the burning fervour of early Union days could now be revived and that we could meet again the same widespread response then found among the younger working journalists to the call to uplift their profession.

But when he talked the matter over with the men in Woolwich and Greenwich with whom he was in touch, Berry confesses that he found more doubt than determination. Perhaps these were the older men who had lost the ardour of youth. He tells how the first meeting was in a public house in Charlton, with three present—himself, Betts, and A. Cameron, of Greenwich, who became a vigorous Union worker. Those three, however, had faith, and issued a formal call to a meeting at the Royal Oak,

Woolwich. About twenty-five turned up there and a resolution was passed "to form a National Association of Journalists, with a subscription of sixpence a week." The second part of this was rescinded at the next meeting on the motion of Berry, who tells me that he got out of bed to attend though suffering from influenza, and it took him years to recover from the ill effects. News came from Manchester that the men were going ahead with a "straight-cut union," so Woolwich threw in its lot with the North. Watts, who was a tireless letter writer where the Union was concerned, wrote to Woolwich to point out that the name "National Association of Journalists" which they were inclined to adopt, was the original name of the Institute before it received its charter. Berry crossed the Thames and told the men of Stratford that "the movement was spreading through the country like a forest fire." Journalists everywhere were ready to link up and he was in touch with scores of them by correspondence.

It was to Fleet Street I finally turned from Woolwich (he writes) to form the Central London branch. I inserted an advertisement in the old *Daily News*, and sent out circulars by the dozen to chief sub-editors and news editors—a title just then creeping in, though the old name of chief reporter still remained in the older offices. I asked them to hand the circulars to the men under them. For the meeting thus convened I persuaded Robert Blatchford, the editor of the *Clarion*, to preside. A. M. Thompson came with him, and I tried to get G. B. Shaw to attend, but he sent his regrets that he could not attend a meeting at that time, and asked us what we intended to do about the Institute funds and its charter. I replied that we did not care two pins about the funds, because we would soon have some in our own organisation, and that by adhering to the recognised customs of the profession we could uphold with greater strength all the benefits that the Charter gave to working journalists. The meeting was held at the Old Cheshire Cheese, and there were, I believe, 33 present. The Central London branch was formed, with Joseph Heighton, a sub-editor of *Tit Bits*, as first secretary and H. Prosser Chanter, night news editor of the London News Agency, as treasurer.

The date of that meeting, I find elsewhere, was March 7, 1907. Fleet Street was said then to be suffering from a respectability complex and inertia, and one of the reasons put forward for the Union was the growth of the Harmsworth, Pearson and Hulton trusts. Among the first officials was also T. W. Hayes. In the absence of precise records, and guided by rather confused memories, it is difficult to get a firm story of the struggles of the Union to gain a footing in Fleet Street. Woodman, of Croydon, narrates a picturesque incident in the campaign which Berry opened seven months before:

The first real raid on Fleet Street was made when the Union called what it described as the "first London Conference" on October 5, 1907. The rendezvous was 21a Maiden-lane, just off the Strand. Brown was right when he said at the formation of the Union that "London would want a lot of working up." Every possible effort to get a good meeting met mostly with faint and furtive, if not also critical and even cynical, interest, and, from some, spirited opposition. Perhaps the place had to do with what approached a fiasco, for 21a Maiden-lane was the headquarters of the old Social Democratic Federation—the "reds" of that day. We met in a dull little hall, conspicuous chiefly for the generous display on the walls of blood-red banners or streamers bearing S. D. F. slogans. Spencer and Watts came, but the audience was certainly not more than a score. Much help had been given by E. J. Goodman, of the *Daily Telegraph* (who became treasurer of the branch). The meeting was a disappointment but did not depress its organisers. The handful of pioneers present included J. E. Brown and a Croydon contingent. R. S. Ponting laughs heartily now on re-calling that he attended in top hat and frock coat. Watts was at that time regretting that the movement in Central London had got into the wrong hands. "There seem none but penny-dreadful writers interested," he said. The meeting was bankrupt when it came to appointing a Central London secretary. So the zealous Ponting volunteered and from Croydon held the secretarial reins for a while, until a secretary more favourably located was found. But the weakling grew in strength and stature and in time rewarded its early sponsors for all they had done.

It appears from all this that both Woolwich and Croydon took a practical interest in the Union's first approaches to their distinguished neighbour, Fleet Street. Berry, soon after his first move in that direction went to Birmingham as a delegate from Woolwich to the 1907 Conference. Looking back he sees the Conference as a band of enthusiasts working unitedly to achieve one end. He says: "It was the most unanimous meeting I ever attended. The outstanding figure was R. C. Spencer, chief reporter of the *Manchester Guardian*. After the business was completed there were mutual congratulations, and speeches from men describing the history of their own branches. I got up to tell the story of Woolwich, and what I had done in other parts of London, but Spencer silenced me with the remark 'we know what you have done.'" Berry was not the only delegate who felt the weight of Spencer's strong hand, but he had the suspicion "that Manchester men, who had obtained the credit for the foundation of the whole movement, were not anxious to share it with anyone else. Some of them have contemptuously referred to 'that peddling movement in Woolwich.'" That, however, is relatively unimportant, and I am sure all fair-minded men would cheerfully admit the invaluable part played by Berry as a pioneer in the

South. The facts speak for themselves; modesty does not preclude an extract from an article by Cameron, of Greenwich, in the *Journalist* of December, 1925: "At a general meeting on May 4, 1907, it was decided to call the branch 'Woolwich and district.' F. J. Mansfield was the chairman. Berry was very much a 'live wire.' Mansfield and Betts seemed at that time to supplement each other admirably, with Mansfield as the exponent of the practical side, giving shape to some of Betts's ideals. They were brave days and if some of their enthusiasm could be recaptured a hundred per cent. union would be achieved."

How the Union came to Birmingham is told in a "live" story from Horace Sanders. He has histrionic talent which has often been used at Union assemblies, and his style of writing is correspondingly dramatic, as will be seen from the following little interlude in my usually prosaic record:

Somewhere about the end of 1906 I was the very young hon. secretary of the Birmingham Press Club, then in Martineau Street. I began to hear whispers of a strange new movement in Manchester. Men who came to attend football matches first spread the news and then others. As my care was to see that the social heart of journalistic Birmingham was kept strong I thought it would be a good idea to ask "these strange blokes from Manchester" to come and talk to us about their new movement, purely as one might arrange a lecture on "The Transmigration of the Souls of journalists into molten metal." I mentioned that I thought it would make an interesting occasion for a social rally and one or two older members, who really had not quite taken in all the facts, said "go ahead." So I arranged for Watts and Spencer to come. Within 48 hours of the news getting out the scenes in that club, and outside, were hectic. Never since have I seen men's passions roused to so bitter and implacable a pitch. It was fantastic that men could have such prejudices and get so mad.

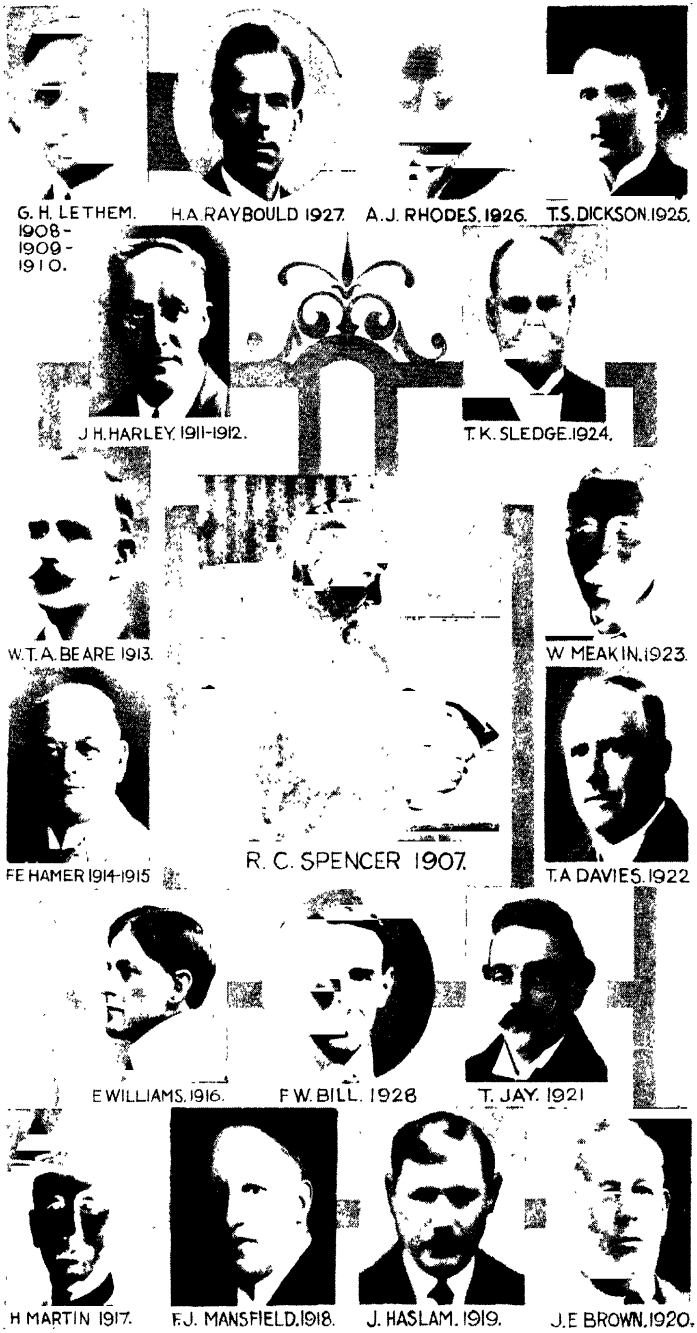
The situation became so explosive that an emergency meeting was called, and in the little bar room I climbed on a table in front of a white-faced and bitter-tongued body of men. I began by saying why I thought we should hear them; if it was silliness let them say so and the Manchester men would "get the bird." If it was just a fantastic scheme then who had anything to fear? Warming to my subject I said that surely here was a glorious opportunity to ask the most searching questions and rout those presumptuous Manchester fellows. After all, it was only a social occasion to hear of a new movement. Surely it was not a criminal act to ask brother journalists to talk and then drink a hospitable cup. There were many interruptions, such as "you dirty young traitor," "you skunk," "you impudent young pup," "you long haired young bastard." I was feeling pretty sick, physically sick, from the strain when suddenly one member picked up a great glass inkstand, weighing a pound, and flung it at me. I was so frightened that I kept on speaking. The missile brushed my temple and dug a deep hole in the wall behind me; it might easily have killed me, and this act instantly changed the temper of the audience. They fell on

the assailant and carried him out fighting. When they came back they said "All right you can have your meeting."

Many stayed away in silent protest when Watts and Spencer came, but a considerable crowd of others attended to hear and criticise—and to be converted. That was my first meeting with Watts and dear old Spencer. Soon their visit resulted in a most enthusiastic branch in Birmingham. Though I was not an official of the branch Watts came through on the telephone and asked me to make all the hotel and other arrangements for the first conference at Easter, 1907. I was not a delegate, but I enjoyed *mise en scène* work. Since those far-off days I have spoken in many places and many varied occasions and in all dimensions (air and television) but never did I get such a basin-full as I did at that club meeting.

Cardiff was an early, and a vigorous starter. Max A. Wright, of the *South Wales Daily News*, and afterwards of the *Daily Express*, saw from an advertisement in the *Manchester Guardian*, that it was proposed to start a Union, and, getting particulars from Watts, he convened a meeting in Cardiff. It was attended by practically all the leading journalists in South Wales, assistant editors, leader writers, and chief sub-editors included. The late John Smurthwaite, chief sub-editor of the *South Wales Echo*, became the first chairman of the branch, and in a very short time 95 per cent. of the working journalists in the area decided to join up. They sent Evans and Hopkins as delegates to the Birmingham Conference in 1907, and on the list of monies received from branches presented in 1908, they were fourth with a total of £42 10s. 6d. Smurthwaite became a member of the Executive. When T. A. Davies became secretary of the branch he made a great effort to obtain a membership of 100 per cent. and got up to 99 per cent., his ambition being thwarted by the single Institute member among the working journalists of Cardiff, who refused to transfer his allegiance.

Plymouth took prompt action right at the beginning and became a sort of parent branch for a wide area in the West. W. E. Perks was the leader, and in the difficult early years of the Union was a valued member of the Executive. He was tireless in travelling all over the vast territory assigned to his care, starting new branches and helping weak ones. I do not know if he ever reached the utmost limits of his district; if he did he must have got very near the Scilly Isles and the Goodwin Sands. London was mercifully excluded from his Southern province and in due time J. E. Brown took a large part of it under his care. Well before the Union started Perks discussed the possibilities of a trade union for journalists with other journalists. The first signal of the Northern advance he received was the small advertise-


G. H. LETHEM. 1908-1909-1910.
H.A. RAYBOULD 1927.
A.J. RHODES. 1926.
T.S. DICKSON. 1925.
J H. HARLEY. 1911-1912.
T. K. SLEDGE. 1924.
W.T.A. BEARE 1913.
W MEAKIN. 1923.
FE HAMER 1914-1915
R. C. SPENCER 1907.
T.A DAVIES. 1922
E WILLIAMS. 1916.
F W. BILL. 1928
T. JAY. 1921
H MARTIN 1917.
F.J. MANSFIELD. 1918.
J. HASLAM. 1919.
J.E BROWN. 1920.

PRESIDENTS OF THE UNION — 1929-1943



J.H Aitken 1933



J.G.Gregson 1932



E.S.Bardsley 1938



R.S.Forsyth 1935



A Kenyon 1943



W.Betts 1931



E.J.T.Didymus 1934



F.G.Humphrey 1936



J.W.T.Ley 1939



H.D.Nichols 1929



D Elliot 1942



T Foster 1941



W.G.M...





...r Hunter 1940

ment in the *Daily News* inviting communication with Watts. Perks wrote away at once, and soon he and Alec Reed (now editor of the House of Lords Debates) called a meeting of Plymouth journalists. A well attended meeting put Perks in the chair. Some Institute men opposed the project as "unnecessary" and "lowering to status," but the majority went ahead and sent Perks as delegate to the 1907 conference at Birmingham. He was paid his bare railway fare and Plymouth contributed two guineas to conference expenses. At the conference Perks took an active part in framing the rules, and the decision to hold an annual delegate meeting was made on his proposition. This was in opposition to the suggestion that it should be left to the Executive to call the next conference. He urged the necessity of prompt and vigorous action, and of taking the whole body of working journalists into their full confidence; it was "now or never," and if they failed it might be years before another attempt was made.

On propaganda and organisation Perks took a strong line. The Executive held him to his text and gave him ample scope. Plymouth formed a branch without delay, with Perks as No. 1. Immediate efforts to get other branches formed were made, and meanwhile all and sundry were enrolled anywhere and allocated to branches already in being. Perks must have signed hundreds of nomination forms. Exeter quickly followed, with P. Barnes as first secretary. By postal propaganda lists of names and addresses all over the South were accumulated. The Sheffield radius agreement case and the York strike spread the fame of the new body. As nobody at the beginning was working East Anglia, and Watts's hands were full, Perks volunteered to include Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk in his propaganda bombardment. When the time was judged ripe meetings were called through local men to form branches. Perks spent fourteen days in Kent personally interviewing men, but, like myself and others, he found this very difficult ground to work. He even went to the Channel Islands, enrolled two men but could not get a branch. He sends me the following stirring story of pioneering work:

I believe the first man I got at Norwich was G. Steward (now Press Officer at 10, Downing Street); at Brighton it was Wisdom, at Southampton, Judd; at Reading, Sawyer. At Bristol I was hung up from midnight to 4 a.m. on returning from a Manchester Executive meeting. I went to the *Bristol Mercury* office and saw Nelson Leaver and A. E. Wilson and helped them 'sub' a verbatim of Lloyd George. That was the germ of

the Bristol branch. I circularised a lot of men in North and South Ireland. With the help of local men, who of course deserve their proper praise, I was instrumental in forming branches at Plymouth, Exeter, Torquay, Barnstaple, Taunton, Bristol, Swindon, Bournemouth, Gloucester, Reading and Cornwall. I was able to take the chair at all these, except Exeter, but I visited and addressed Exeter meetings two or three times. Portsmouth, Southampton and Surrey (Croydon centre) got to work on their own. When my constituency was divided, upon the enlargement of the Executive, Brown took the eastern half, called it his "diocese," and so earned the title of "Bishop" Brown. I handed my propaganda information on to him. I think it was at the Manchester A.D.M. I had a talk with Watts about the risks incurred by propaganda men, and the upshot was that the victimisation clause was placed in the rules for their protection.

The germ injected at Bristol did not have its proper effect until the spring of 1909, when the branch was formed and sent a delegate to the London A.D.M. Apparently for a time A. E. Wilson (in recent years dramatic critic of the *Star*) and Leaver (to become news editor of the *Daily Sketch*) constituted the branch, but their persistent appeals soon began to tell. J. W. T. Ley (President of the Union in 1939), who had served his apprenticeship on the *Bristol Mercury*, on his return there in April, 1909, found Wilson and Leaver "subbing" on that paper. Ley was then a member of the Institute and, though critical of the ineffectiveness of that body, was not yet satisfied that the new organisation was going to do any better. He was fair game for peaceful persuasion, and once when he had to catch a train at 3-15 a.m. and asked Leaver to send him a telegram to be sure of being aroused, a wire arrived at 2 a.m. worded: "When are you going to join the Union? Leaver." Wilson, who was actually the first man to join the Union in Bristol, learnt of the movement from news in the *Clarion*. In reply to inquiry Watts said the Union was not yet formed, but a little later he wrote again advising Wilson to join the Birmingham branch, as that was the nearest to him. Before long Watts, Meakin, Perks and other founders addressed a meeting at Bristol that led to the formation of the branch. Wilson made elaborate preparations and there was a fairly good rally, but he recalls:

> The snobbish, Institute-bound and staid fellows of the *Western Daily Press* and the *Times and Mirror* came to scoff rather than to pray. They all spoke against the vulgarity of trade unionism and unanimously refused to come in. Even the *Mercury* men cold-shouldered us. But the branch was formed with myself as secretary and Leaver (chief sub-editor of the *Mercury*) as chairman, and no members. We ploughed a lone furrow for a long time. Our notices of meetings never attracted anyone. One or

two local men, inclined to be sympathetic, stayed out because they feared the proprietors would not like it. The *Mercury* smash in November, 1909, provoked Union activity and started the membership going.

The effective way in which the Union set about finding new posts for the men displaced by the demise of the *Mercury* was a telling proof of the value of the new body. One other thing confirmed Ley in his resolve to join. It is a charming little object lesson in Union brotherhood. At a gathering of the *Mercury* out-of-works word came of a vacancy at Newport. Wilson turned to Ley and said: "Ley, you are the only one not in the Union. We are being looked after. You have promised to join in January and we know your promise is good. This is your job." Ley got it and was duly grateful. It was a proud moment for him when, 30 years later, in the very street in Bristol in which he entered journalism as a lad in 1895, and in which he attended his first N.U.J. meeting in Dec. 1909, he was elected President of the Union, with his son a member of his own mother branch, present. When he remembered that, at the age of 35, when that son was born, he was earning as a chief reporter less than half the salary the son was now receiving at the age of 26, I know that Ley felt in his heart a deep satisfaction at his opportunities of service to the Union which had wrought such an advance in the whole scale of journalists' remuneration.

East Lancashire takes pride in two things—that it was No. 1 branch, and that within its fold W. N. Watts in his earlier career learnt the rudiments of the gospel of trade unionism for journalists. The branch's claim to unique honours has been variously advanced in these terms—it is the oldest branch; it was the first branch in the country to get going; it was the first constituent part of the Union. Thanks to the very clear statements which members of this keen branch, notably the veterans, have favoured me with it is possible to make a positive statement. East Lancashire was undoubtedly the first formally constituted branch after the decision at Birmingham (Easter, 1907) to form the Union. The story of this event and what led up to it, is told by Harry H. Green, who jokingly says in a letter that I would not half regret my curiosity about the claim for his old branch. For years he had been hoping that someone would take on the job of settling this question and he would send me a pile of stuff that would make me dizzy. To quote his record:

W. Newman Watts, as he signed himself, "Tommy" as he was affectionately known, was quietly but keenly working to found a national

union of working journalists as far back as 1899, and probably before. In 1899 he was district reporter on the *Blackburn Evening Express* and the *Weekly Standard*, and came to be chief reporter at headquarters at Blackburn, of both those papers. When he came to Blackburn I was secretary to the editor there, and Watts appointed me junior on his staff. Young as I was (age 17) he talked to me often about the need for a union in the profession. It must be confined strictly to "working" journalists. "It must be a real trade union, or it will be no good," he used to say; "journalists are scared of such a thing, but it will have to come. The Institute is no good." As proof he told me how a Darwen staff, suffering rotten conditions, decided to raise certain matters at a branch meeting of the Institute. When they got there they found their proprietor already sitting in the position of chairman. They did not raise their grievances. Watts joined the *Northern Daily Telegraph* in October, 1899, and got me there as a junior. I was able to see how he never let the subject of a "real Union" drop. When in 1902 he left Blackburn to join the *Manchester Evening News* his parting words to me were to this effect: "I shall be able to get the Union going now. Some of the Manchester chaps are keen on it." He asked me to keep the idea going among the lads about my own age.

Early in 1907 he came over once or twice specially to talk to us about the great progress that had been made. He mentioned to me R. S. Spencer, of the *Manchester Guardian*, and spoke warmly of the pioneer work Spencer was doing. I think they were travelling to various towns making converts. Then a few days after the formation of the Union Watts came to Blackburn, evidently anxious to get branches definitely formed. We had an informal meeting in the reporters' room at the *Telegraph*. This would have been daring in some offices, but we were blessed with a broad-minded proprietor, the late Mr. T. P. Ritzema. In fact all the "brass hats" were kindly disposed, and we thought nothing about it. The late R. S. Mackie, then editor, was one of the foundation members. Will Gedney, chief reporter, acted as chairman. He and the late W. C. Hawthorn, then sports editor, gave Watts every support. Watts told us that although Manchester had agreed to form a branch they had not yet met to do so by resolution, and if we did so right away we would be the first branch of the N.U.J. in the country. We 'phoned Accrington men, who were as keen as we were, and called a meeting at once. When we notified Watts that we had actually formed the branch he wrote that we were the first to do so. Our first official accounts book was headed "No. 1" and my contribution card (the cards were numbered in those days) was similarly inscribed when Watts sent it. As a matter of fact my own contribution was the first entry on the list. When the formation resolution was passed J. S. Raine, newly-appointed financial secretary, remarked "Gentlemen, this is the first branch of the National Union of Journalists; I'll take your contributions." Richardson, when he was secretary after Watts, recognised us as No. 1, and in at least one letter he addressed me as "No. 1 of No. 1." I ought to mention that although the *Telegraph* men were so active in the formation of the Union they did not need it themselves. Conditions there were as good as anywhere in the country; better than in most offices. But we realised, as

Watts pointed out, that bad offices were a menace to the good. The seven Blackburn scribes at the first meeting were all *Telegraph* men.

W. Gedney, in a note, says he remembers Watts complimenting him (with his slight stammer) on becoming " the f-first chairman of the f-first branch, old man." Even if the Union was born in Manchester, adds Gedney, it was certainly conceived in Blackburn with Watts as its creator. Although Woolwich claimed the unique distinction of holding its first diminutive, but properly-convened, meeting for formal discussion in advance of Manchester, that was just an accident of time. It was the spirit of the crusade that gave life and that was stirring here and there all over the country. The wind was blowing hither and thither and it fanned into flame in many places the sparks of a new resolve. Thus little groups of keen men were meeting in quite a number of districts, and claims to precedence in date are scarcely possible of settlement, even if such an inquiry were worth while. In my view it is not, and this book must not be regarded as a kind of court of appeal for the decision of points which have often been the subject of lively contention. Let us heed the substance and lose the shadow.

Among the various narratives of branch beginnings that have reached me there is one that is very interesting, and in some senses typical of many others, from F. Judd and F. W. H. Reed, dealing with Southampton and Winchester and Portsmouth. Unfortunately all the Southampton branch records were destroyed in one of the blitzes which played havoc there, but the men happily survive and from their memories the story can be told. Those who took the first steps had to face all kinds of discouragement and often threats from anti-trade unionists. Among the small number of working journalists in Southampton agitation had been growing years before the Union arrived. Wages were disgracefully low, and some employers found a justification in the fact that their men were free to do linage, although a newcomer was never told that all the linage that was worth while was tightly held by men in the top positions, who unblushingly " milked " the copy of their subordinates and hardly even said a " thank you." The writer of a column of shipping notes saw his matter sent weekly to a national shipping paper, the man who appropriated it writing a few lines of introduction on the first folio. Such a practice, and others like it, created an urge for reform, and in 1905 there was an agreement to join the Institute in the hope of a forward move. " Come inside and we will all act together,"

said the secretary of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight district of the Institute. A speaker was obtained from Institute headquarters, who addressed the largest meeting of journalists ever held in the town up to the time. What happened there is graphically described by Judd:

We heard a good deal about the status of the profession, but very little about the state of the "professors," and I, then with a face almost innocent of hair and a shyness that must have been as painful to the distinguished visitor as it was to me, ventured to ask what steps the Institute were taking to secure adequate remuneration for the working journalist. I pointed out that journalists of unquestioned qualifications were lucky if they were getting 30/- a week, that qualified men with lesser service were getting as low as 25/- a week, and that others, after serving an "apprenticeship," were getting less than garbage collectors. I retain a vivid memory of the look of horror that settled on the faces of the grey beards at the top of the table. I thought I had dropped a grammatical brick. There was a hurried consultation, and the paid official from London, smiling benevolently at the blushing youngster, replied courteously and quietly: "I understand that my friend has not been in the Institute long, and I am afraid he does not appreciate what the Institute has done for the profession." My reply was that what I did not appreciate was the lightness of the amount I was able to take home, and that it looked as if I had been inveigled into paying two years' subscription to the Institute to maintain a status that was very near the poverty line.

Among Judd's papers is the official notification of his election as a member of the Institute, dated May 22, 1905, which shows that £1 3s. 0d. was due on election, being 10/6d. entrance fee and 12/6d. first annual subscription. Also there is his first membership card of the N.U.J., one of the large pink cards with only two inside pages which were first used. It was first issued by the Southampton and Winchester branch, and the name was altered to Portsmouth, when the former was absorbed by the latter. The entrance fee of 5/- was paid on June 15, 1907, and the transfer to Portsmouth was on July 6, 1907. The incident described above could fairly be taken as representative of the general conditions which forced so many to turn in despair from Institute to Union. It was the background of the formation of the Southampton branch, which was to see with pride two of its pioneers working on the National Executive Committee (Judd and Reed), and one promoted to the presidency (E. J. T. Didymus), whose first office in the Union was that of minute secretary to the branch. Judd did good work on the Executive until compelled to retire by a serious breakdown in health. This sort of thing happened to quite a number of Union workers who spent their strength and

leisure in exhausting labour for the common cause. So large was Judd's " constituency " at one time that he kept in touch with members by means of the " Monthly Reminder," a cyclostyled sheet which was the first provincial Union production of the kind. It was towards the end of 1940 that the early records, which had been carefully preserved, were entirely destroyed in an enemy raid. The *Echo* office and contents also suffered destruction.

Only one or two members are left who took part in the early meetings. At the inaugural, on February 9, 1907, T. E. Dixon, of Winchester, was the chairman, and F. W. H. Reed (Southampton) acted as hon. secretary. Seven names of prospective members were received, but only three actually joined. This was disappointing, especially as Portsmouth had started a strong branch in the previous months, and was giving all possible help. There was a recrudescence of Institute propaganda, and men in senior posts did all they could to damp down Union enthusiasm. Some years later, says Judd, threats were to come, when he and other Executive men, were shown letters from Institute-inspired quarters suggesting that their continued employment in the profession was not in the best interests thereof. The early poison doses were the spreading of such phrases as " disgruntled agitators." Reed, who had called the first meeting at Southampton, left for the North, and altogether the infant branch became so weak that Portsmouth " mothered " it until it could fend for itself. H. C. Sawyer, who signed his letters " Bob Sawyer," was secretary at Portsmouth, and his keenness is evident from his messages to Reed. Here is a telegram handed in at Portsmouth on Jan. 5, 1907: " Reed, Exeter Hotel, Southampton. N.U.J. Branch formed. Good meeting. Large membership. Desire to co-operate. Sawyer." His letter sent to Reed just after is worth quoting:

Southsea, Jan. 13, '07.

We had a long but entirely friendly meeting, and no opposition. Altogether there were a dozen present, of whom eleven joined at once. P———, who is not hostile, dislikes the words " trade unionism " and awaits developments. G———, as usual, sits on the fence. P——— is, of course, hostile. Every other journalist in the district, with these three exceptions, has joined or is joining. Is it not capital ! I have written a 2/3 col. report of doings and minor recommendations to Watts. We are against reporter-comps, in favour of separate protective and benevolent funds, recommend a 12/- per year sub., paid monthly, quarterly or annually, suggest London as place for national conference, and we desire to co-operate with you and the I.W. to form a big district. We paid up 1/- each as an earnest of good feeling and I have sent a 13/- P.O. to

Watts. A penny each sent a telegram to you. I take it that in any event you will form a branch, even if you only get six members. Come to us direct if you like. We should be delighted to have you and raise our branch strength to over a score. I assure you our men are absolutely united on the question and we shall not have a single backslider. The enthusiasm is marvellous, really it is.

Yours fraternally, BOB SAWYER.

The light was never allowed to go out in Southampton. They met in each other's houses, and after two years once again emerged as a branch. One of the steadfast men at Southampton was F. Woodward, the first chairman, who rejoined when the Southampton branch was put properly on its feet in June, 1909, under the inspiration of J. E. Brown. The first chairman was A. E. Jones, then sports editor of the *Southern Daily Echo*, and afterwards general manager of Southern Newspapers, Ltd. Judd began a long term of service as hon. secretary. It was named the "Southampton and District" branch, and cycling parties went to nearby towns, into adjoining counties and there were also visits to the Isle of Wight. At one time the membership included journalists in five counties—Derbyshire, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire. The Derbyshire member was F. H. Naish. As a result of attending a meeting at Southampton while on holiday he decided to join the Union, and there being no branch in Derby, he was signed on by Southampton, but carried inspiration back to Derby and was one of the foundation members of the branch there. Judd did a lot of itinerant preaching of the Union message, and was helped by many colleagues. They had success at Salisbury, where soon the number of members justified a local branch. To show how the movement spread, at one Salisbury meeting was present a visitor, H. W. Fisher, of Bath, and he returned to start a new branch there. Wiltshire was not easy ground, with many of its journalists isolated units. Swindon and Salisbury were first tackled, but the district men had to be brought into the fold. Letters were not enough, so Judd gave up a summer's holiday to make a tour. The personal touch proved effective in most cases, but salaries were so low that the small Union subscription was formidable to men who were struggling for the sake of their paper and their own dignity to keep up appearances. Bournemouth, Aldershot and Alton journalists first joined the Union by way of Southampton, before organising their own branches. A message of encouragement to the "loyal trio" at Southampton was sent by Watts, who must have written hundreds of letters about this time, when typewriters were not available.

and his pen had to fly. The following letter, sent from Boggart Hole Clough, may be taken as a sample of the inspiring notes with which the General Secretary helped to keep the fire burning:

Manchester, May 16, '07.

Dear Mr. Reed, I am sorry you have not been able to establish the Southampton and Winchester branch, but the fault is not yours. Some day the men who are now holding aloof will probably be glad to come in. The Executive will not be meeting again for two or three weeks, and then I will explain the position. Meanwhile keep the money you have in hand or may receive, and also the membership cards. I presume I may tell the Committee you think it better to be attached to Portsmouth for the present? As to Mr. Edwards, of Yeovil, I will write him asking him to join Portsmouth. I hope the loyal trio at Southampton will not be discouraged. Changes may take place in the district and newcomers may be more amenable to your persuasive eloquence. Though your efforts have not met with the success they deserved I should like to express my personal thanks to you for the work you have done. We have no backsliders in the North and Midlands and the organisation will progress steadily. We cannot run all at once, nor until we get funds can we be as militant as some of us would like. But the time will come, when the N.U.J. will be a power to be reckoned with and when men now holding aloof will realise that others like you and your two colleagues did a great work in keeping the flag flying under adverse circumstances. Never hesitate to write me if there is anything you want to know.

Yours sincerely, W. N. WATTS.

P.S. I enclose receipt for 7/6d.

Liverpool made a lame start in 1908, and the apathy was so great that the branch soon flickered out. Caleb Rees attended the conference of 1907 for Liverpool, and served for some years later on the Executive, but the area was unrepresented at Leeds in 1908. Watts paid a visit in 1909, and his straight talk set the branch going again on a firm basis and with a new set of officials. The chairman was "Joe" Boardman, of the *Daily Post* (afterwards news editor); the corresponding secretary, Raymond A. Coulson, *Daily Dispatch;* financial secretary, C. Davis, *Daily Mail;* treasurer, J. G. Gregson, *Daily Post*, who became President of the Union in 1932. A little later Gregson combined the duties of financial secretary and treasurer. When National Health Insurance came the younger and lower paid journalists on Merseyside found they had much to gain from the N.U.J. Approved Society, and they got their first real trade union impetus.

At this point I fear I must call a halt to my travels among branches in the 1906-7 era. Many of the branches which figured in the 1907 and 1908 delegate meetings have not been referred

to, but space is limited, and in expressing regret to the many who deserve mention here, but yet are not mentioned, I beg them to accept the will for the deed. We have seen how little groups got together here and there, how the movement centred in Manchester, how the formal constitution of branches was begun. Now for a brief space let us think of the arduous missionary work on which the first leaders embarked in their resolve to make the Union a truly national body. There was a time, at the very beginning, when the new conception did not rise above merely local associations in some places. The project was placed in its due proportion and setting in the national appeal sent out by Watts in December, 1906. This secured the nation-wide response aimed at, but opinion and enthusiasm among the rank and file needed encouragement and education, and to this end the missionary crusade was directed. The exploits, adventures, strange and humorous incidents, the triumphs and the failures met with on this road would furnish a volume in themselves. I can tell only a few that have come my way.

During the building-up period propaganda work from headquarters was done very largely by Watts, Spencer, Lethem, Meakin, and J. H. Harley (President in 1911 and 1912). Leaders in the South country have already been named. Lethem, whose persuasive powers on the platform dated back to when as a youth he was an ardent temperance advocate, addressed meetings, sometimes woefully small, from Aberdeen to Torquay; and, in company with Harley, penetrated twice into Ireland. This work involved the sacrifice, not only of weekends, but of holidays as well. It was found difficult to get journalists to attend meetings at all, in some places; and even when they did assemble the trade union appeal fell on stony ground. Thus the first bearers of the Fiery Cross often had weary journeys with little reward. It is perhaps hard for the youth of to-day to realise the labour and the struggle that their elders went through in those early days. When the attacks on apathy and hostility began to tell, however, helpers came forward in growing numbers, and soon Watts was able to call on London and other centres to send speakers wherever needed and Watts himself must have made an incredible number of speeches all over the kingdom. Once I remember encountering him among the alien orchards of Kent, where some of us had many tussles with Institute die-hards. At Chatham, where I had served my articles to the "art and mystery" of reporting, Betts and I called a meeting, and only one local journalist turned up.

We talked about the new movement over a game of billiards, and when in after years Betts recalled this journey in some presidential speech, I think, he expressed the conviction that even that forlorn effort was worth while. Kent was not all barren; for instance at Maidstone we had a good meeting and, in spite of Institute critics, made an impression. Travelling far and wide as he did Watts discovered many cases of low pay and bad conditions, and he made a black-list of those newspapers. This he kept secret, but when the Union was properly launched these proprietors were quietly approached and many improvements were gained by private negotiation.

Some time after the Union's success in the Sheffield radius agreement case complaint reached head office of a similar grievance in the Brighton district. Three executive men who were in London for the second A.D.M., namely, Watts, Lethem and Meakin, got away quietly to Brighton to meet the local man affected. The rendezvous was a churchyard, chosen so that he should not be seen conferring with such dangerous characters. Tours sometimes had a happy issue. For instance we find Lethem reporting in September, 1909, to the executive sub-committee that as a result of his travels in Scotland new branches had been formed at Aberdeen and Dundee, following the establishment of the Glasgow branch. In my own presidential year (1918-19) I went over the same ground and found active branches in the Scottish centres. It was an uphill task in the classic shades of Edinburgh, but I recall as pleasant incidents a little address at an impromptu gathering in the *Scotsman* office, and a friendly chat with Mr. Wilson, of the *Edinburgh Evening News*.

Another Sussex story seems to give colour to the theory that there was at one time a predilection for seeking sanctuary in that county. At Horsham a local newspaper man had a grievance, but no amount of persuasion could get him to put it into writing. "Bishop" Brown and A. W. Apted (of Croydon, a foundation member of the Union) were deputed to see him, but so great was his fear of getting the "sack" if seen in company with Union men, that it had to be left to him to fix the place of meeting. His choice was the parish church. The condition was that the visitors should arrive some ten minutes or so before the local man. They did so and reverently took their seats in a pew. After some time their fearful friend entered looking pale and nervous, and joined them in the pew. There the grievance was discussed, with frequent glances over the shoulder by the aggrieved brother, who

apparently feared that someone who knew him might enter by chance, spy him with suspicious strangers and report to his employer. At the end of the interview he left with a sigh of relief at his escape from detection, but made the two deputies promise that they would remain in the church sufficiently long to enable him to get well out of sight. They did so, but to make doubly sure, they took a stroll round the churchyard, inspecting with apparent interest many of the ancient tombstones before making their way to the railway station. If Brown were alive to-day one would love to hear not only of his "meditations among the tombs," but some of those more lively episodes in which he participated with so much gusto.

Sussex looked for a time to be as unpromising a field as Kent. It was difficult to get the men to hold a meeting to consider the formation of a union branch. There was such a fear of consequences. Many letters were written to try and get a meeting at Hastings or Eastbourne. Either there were no replies at all, or evasive ones. At last in desperation Brown and Apted fixed a meeting place and time themselves. They booked accommodation at the old Royal Oak, Hastings—yet another emblematic name. The train service between the Croydon and Redhill area and Hastings was so difficult at that time that the two missionaries had to stay for the night, but they had their reward, for nearly every journalist in Hastings turned up and others from miles around. After a few speeches Brown suggested that they should join up with Eastbourne and form a joint branch. But one asked "Why can't we have a branch of our own?" With a glance of pleased surprise Brown replied "Of course you can," and the Hastings branch was then and there formed.

In the last quarter of 1910 Watts was able to report remarkable progress. Perks had broken ground in Bournemouth and Dorset and got new members in Gloucestershire and Bristol and Bath; a Manchester member on holiday in Barrow-in-Furness got a branch started there; Lethem had a similar success in Cumberland; and Birmingham members had laid the foundations of a branch with Coventry as its centre. Where members joined in districts not yet boasting a branch they were attached to the Central Office branch for the time being. No branches had then been established on the North East coast, but members were joining. In October, 1910, Watts (still an honorary official) made a week's propaganda tour in midland territory where the Union still was weak. At Grantham he found ground well prepared by

one solitary member, and made progress. Persistence paid; at Peterborough where a meeting had failed, a return visit got several interested, and a further call a fortnight after got a branch started. At Northampton most of the men enrolled, for the Leicestershire branch had already secured several nominees. A modest introduction to Norwich promised the foothold sought in Norfolk. Cambridge had been described as hopeless from the Union point of view, and so Watts was agreeably surprised to find himself preaching to an audience that required no conversion. Colchester was more responsive than had been expected, and Ipswich with a new branch led the way in Suffolk.

The " Invasion of Ireland " in 1909 was undertaken by Watts, Lethem and Harley. They went to Dublin and got a meeting of twenty. Almost a Donnybrook scene was created by an exchange of repartee. Harley was speaking of the evils of radius agreements when an interrupter said there were no such phenomena in Ireland. Some one else retorted that that was wrong. " You're another," shouted the interrupter, and it took all Watts's art of suavity to bring the meeting round. But still, a Dublin branch was formed. Harley, who had to return and leave Watts wandering in a strange land, afterwards reported on the secretary's long journeys to Waterford and Derry, his fruitless visit to Cork, and good meeting in Newry, but the net result was that they could see their way to about a hundred members in Ireland.

In September, 1908, Lethem and Meakin set about the conquest of Gloucestershire and early in 1909 a branch began with nine members. The mover of the resolution to form the branch was Archie Kenyon, who attended his first A.D.M. in 1910, has since done excellent work on the Executive, and has reached the presidency both of the N.U.J. and the International. There is a point of unique interest here, for the first chairman of the branch, Walter Ansell, has been re-elected every year since and now is in his thirty-fifth year of office. He too has given solid service to the Union at large, which is referred to elsewhere. There were many initial obstacles in the Union campaign in Gloucestershire, with its 1,200 square miles and inconvenient transport. In the area were members of the Institute whose low earnings made it impossible for them to pay contributions to two organisations and who were unwilling to forgo the benefits for which they had already made payments. This was a substantial difficulty which had to be recognised, but nevertheless the Union gradually gathered recruits in Gloucester, Cheltenham and the smaller places.

CHAPTER III.

DEEDS OF LEADERS LIVE.

Over the sea our galleys went,
With cleaving prows in order brave,
To a speeding wind and a bounding wave—
A gallant armament.
" Paracelsus " (*Browning*).

Other men laboured and ye are entered into their labours.—
John V., 38.

FOUNDERS and pioneers, we salute you ! Wherever you are, in this world or the next, far or near, in the body or in the spirit, we bring to remembrance your stalwart hearts and your doughty deeds. Those who shared with you the first fine, careless raptures of a new crusade and still survive, have imperishable memories ; may the succeeding generations who enjoy the fruits of your labours not fail to hold you in gratitude and affection !

These men were unselfish. Like Moses in Egypt they saw the oppression of their brethren and struck a blow for liberation. They had no immediate gain for themselves to entice them—rather they had to face the risk of loss. But they persevered, and they have succeeded. Their example shows the power of an ideal, calling out reserves of eager, voluntary service, and the spirit in which all noble causes are born. It is a great thing for us old men to recall the fire and hope of youth, when all the trees were green, lads, and all our geese were swans. But it is finer still if the backward glance assures us that the hopes were destined to fruition and that the labour was not in vain. Men of all sorts found themselves in company for a common purpose. Some few were of the devotional type who would be welcome in any " happy band of pilgrims " ; but most would have found more congenial company in the Canterbury pilgrims of the Tabard Inn. But all, roysterer or recluse, blithe or solemn, round head or royalist, discovered in unison a transcendent aim which obliterated in its own sphere all other difference. These pioneers were

once likened to Daniels by a candid friend of the Union, the late Lord Riddell. In 1925, when he was chairman of the London newspaper proprietors, he attended the annual union dinner at Birmingham, and said: "The journalists of this country owe a great deal to the Daniels who started the Union. It is not so very difficult to be a Daniel when an organisation is in a flourishing condition, and has a useful bank balance, but it is an entirely different matter when the bank balance is £5 4s. 1d., as was the case 18 years ago, when the Union was in its infancy." This was a reference to the financial statement at the foundation conference at Birmingham in 1907. This book attempts to describe the early scenes and the first workers in the cause. As for the men, anything like biographies are impossible, first, because of the limits of space, and secondly, because the facts are sparse and difficult to obtain. But something in the way of biographical glimpses will be ventured. There is solid truth, as well as poetic fancy, in the words of Ovid: "The deeds of the leader shall live and the toilsome glory of his actions; this endures, this alone escapes the greedy destruction of death."

The broad human sympathies, the brotherly kindness of William Newman Watts, his passionate pursuit of his ideal, and his tireless self-sacrifice in working for it, did more than anything else to bring about the establishment of the National Union of Journalists in the year 1907. All who helped him in the great effort, the remnant of whom are to-day a sadly diminished band, acknowledged his leadership; when he died in 1918 the official wreath of evergreens and roses bore the words: "The Union he cherished will never forget." In temperament and character he seemed to have been made for the task. He was shrewd and very practical; he liked to get things done, and to do them as well as they could be done. He was free from the taint of self-seeking, and his greatest satisfaction ever was to serve the cause—that of helping the "bottom dog." Those of us who knew him and worked with him have the gracious memory of a lovable and genial soul, who radiated good humour, kindliness and enthusiasm. Here is an early tell-tale incident. He was sent out by his paper, the *Manchester Evening News*, to report a railway accident, in the hope of getting something for the last edition. As he hurried into a waiting room where a lot of reporters were busy writing, not far from the scene of the accident, someone called out "Hallo Watts." Others looked up and gave him a cheery welcome. A local man who was going out turned back and said: "Are you

Watts of Manchester?" "Yes," replied Watts. "Here's my copy," was the response, "thank God I can do a bit for a man who has put hope in the hearts of us poor, slave-driven country reporters." Those at the *News* office would never have known of the incident if they had not asked Watts how he was able to get an excellent account of the accident in so short a time. Sometimes when things looked a bit blank his friends used to cheer up Watts by saying: "Never mind, think of the man at the railway accident." Watts's colleagues were ever ready to take extra duty in order to set him free for Union work. Happily his editor, W. A. Balmforth (also a Union pioneer) was a close friend who helped by arranging office work in ways all journalists will understand. The paper lost nothing; indeed it gained by the strength of the right spirit without which no staff can realise its best.

Watts was a working journalist in the real sense of the term—a thoroughly qualified reporter, a fine shorthand writer and rapid transcriber, a good all-round pressman. Print was in his family. His father held a responsible post in that trade. Watts was born at Islington, North London, and was taken to Manchester in infancy. His first newspaper job was sorting out "copy" in the *Manchester Evening News* office. In the 1880's as a young man he had a drilling in reporting at Oldham and Bolton; in 1891 he was chief reporter of the *Darwen News*, and while there he married Miss Annie Robinson, of Moston, who came of a well-known Miles Platting family. At Blackburn he was chief reporter of the *Lancashire Daily Express*, and when that paper came to its end he joined the *Northern Daily Telegraph*, Blackburn. In 1902 he returned to the *Manchester Evening News*, of which he became chief reporter when W. A. Balmforth was made editor. Watts remained in that position until his death at the age of 50, of a fell disease which cut short in its prime a career of big achievement and even bigger promise. A modest man, Balmforth enjoyed the esteem of all pressmen and is now the most popular of veterans. He presided at some of the earliest meetings held to consider a union, and I understand that it was only the fact that Watts was the obvious secretary that prevented him from being the first president, the feeling being that the two chief officers could not be chosen from the same staff. His attitude can be gauged from the remark he is said to have made at one of the first meetings. "We must be a real trade union and join up with the 'comps.'" But for the loyal and ungrudging help of his wife and children Watts could have never have struggled through the first few years

WILLIAM NEWMAN WATTS
Prime mover in founding the Union and first General Secretary.

H. M RICHARDSON
General Secretary for 18 years.

of toil. They saw their home turned into a Union workshop, and father pre-occupied with a great mission. Miss Annie Watts, who is now head of a big school at Blackpool, has sent me some impressions :

I can remember when we were living at Blackley, Manchester (she says), spending many hours each evening addressing envelopes, etc., for Dad. These were sent to journalists in every town in England. The six of us, mother, father, my sister, two brothers and myself, all helped. We folded circulars, put on stamps and at the end of the evening heaped them into baskets and my younger brother's toy barrow. He was a youngster of about eight. We generally managed to fill the post box nearest our home, so that the last lot of envelopes could hardly be jammed in the box. I can remember quite vividly the different postmen who collected there being most annoyed at the extra weight they had to carry. I believe father arranged for a special collection when the work grew heavier. How we youngsters enjoyed the whole business ! It was a game to us, seeing who could address the most envelopes or put in the circulars the quickest. Sometimes we invited our friends in to help. I don't think we children realised what it was all about ; it was enough for us that Dad wanted our help. We idolised him and were ready to give him a lift whenever he needed it. Next, one room in our house was converted into an office, where we all worked each evening. At that time Dad was away a great deal addressing meetings and laying foundations for more branches of the N.U.J.—we called it the "Nudge." When the Health Insurance Act came there was a great deal of extra work. First circulars appealing to men to join and then insurance cards made out and dispatched. Father was at the *Evening News* office by day and we children were at school. Myself, the eldest, was studying hard for entering the teaching profession. Despite the well-nigh exhaustless energy of us all, we began to feel the strain, and then Mr. J. Gladwin was appointed as clerk to deal with the Insurance section. Even then our help was required, as the membership was growing. Soon another clerk was necessary and in 1913 we moved to a larger house where rooms could be set aside purely for office purposes. Later a Union office was started in Strutt Street, Manchester, near the *Evening News* office. In 1917 we saw signs that all was not well with Dad. We thought he worried about my elder brother, then in France as an officer of a battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers. But it was an internal complaint. The next five months were truly terrible, and we knew he was fighting a losing battle. We hoped against hope that by a miracle he might be spared to carry on his good work. Amid all his pain his beloved Union was never far from his thoughts. Suddenly, early on May 23, 1918, at the height of a thunderstorm came the end of the earthly stage of Dad's life. The world, particularly that sphere represented by journalism and by his family, was the poorer for his passing.

Going back to Watts's start as a lad on the *Manchester Evening News*, T. Robinson, his brother-in-law, observes that sixteen was the lowest age they could then commence night work. Sorting copy, and looking after the needs of the literary staff was no easy

task, as he found when in charge during Gladstone's Midlothian campaign. In his young days Watts played Rugby with a team called the Blackley Rangers and he gained some success as a path runner. While at Bolton he had an unfortunate experience. Returning from an inquest at Horwich he was accosted by a tramp, who took a threatening attitude when refused money on demand. Watts got in one of his best Rugby tackles and floored his man. While they were on the ground another man came from behind and viciously kicked Watts on the lower part of the spine. Watts got clear and ran, but bore traces of the injury. At a Darwen football match a homing pigeon tossed by Watts with a report of the first half, flew round a few times and then settled in the midst of the playing field. The crowd laughed uproariously. The telephoned account reached Blackburn before the bird, which, when it made a start on its homeward flight, was loudly cheered. Watts did a good turn in a manslaughter case, where a man had been sentenced, notwithstanding his protestations of innocence. A woman told Watts that the convicted man was innocent and that it was her man who was in the fatal struggle, in which the victim had been the aggressor. This man had safely reached Australia and she was going out to him. She asked Watts to tell her story to the police after she had boarded the outward-bound steamer. Watts did so, with the result that the confession was taken up by the Chief Constable and accepted by the Home Secretary, and the innocent prisoner was released.

The moving little picture which Miss Watts has given of the home which was converted into a hive of Union activity, revives in myself some memories both proud and pathetic. I had to visit that home on Union business, and in the period up to his death I was in constant correspondence with Watts. In fact my file grew to massive proportions, but eight years ago, when a serious breakdown in health made me leave Fleet Street and seek a quiet retreat in the country, I had a big bonfire, and many records were consumed. But I could not force myself to destroy all, and even now, when salvage officials are demanding every scrap of paper, I cling to the remnants, for they are cherished links with some "brave days of old." Right up to the end Watts wrote his letters by hand, and many of them ran to several quarto pages. When I took the chair of the Central London Branch at the beginning of 1915 he wrote offering any service of which he was capable. Communications were a tax in 1917, when the President (Alf. Martin) was in Sheffield, the Vice-President

(myself) in London and the general secretary in Manchester. Co-ordination was a circuitous business. For instance, on May 29, 1917, Watts wrote: "Dear Mansfield, re Death Benefit scheme, I enclose the Actuary's reply to my letter and also Martin's comments. Perhaps you will return me both. What do you think . . . Martin thinks there was something re Distress Fund at the Emergency meeting, which ought to go in the minutes. I thought it was an informal chat. What do you think? Anything is all right to me. W. N. W." One member in the West had pestered Head Office about some grievance and Watts, who rarely lost patience, exclaimed: "I shall be glad when our disgruntled people are in the Army or somewhere else . . . I am absolutely sick of this case."

Watts was sensitive and the distance between London and Manchester was a bar to the personal contact which prevents misunderstandings. When inquiries were being made about the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation in 1917 there had been some difficulty in getting information required from that quarter, and Watts offered to get it from the Typographical Association. It was a matter of some delicacy then and I wrote Watts saying that I did not see any warrant for approaching the latter body. Watts replied with a detailed explanation and said: "I place on record these facts because unwittingly you have misrepresented my attitude, and I cannot permit this, even from one of my best friends." A little later he wrote that we would let the business drop as there had clearly been a misunderstanding. On wages questions there was an epistolary circuit between Watts, W. Meakin (hon. employment secretary), Martin and myself, and the arrangement for deputations to proprietors was no easy task at a time when we were approaching various federations. In October, 1917, writing about necessary meetings Watts said: "Personally I am quite agreeable to these meetings being held in London, seeing you and the others have to come here so often on Union business." By November poor Watts was feeling very ill and he wrote me: "I am as weak as a kitten and become frightfully tired after the least exertion. Doctor tells me unless I reduce my work by half I shall soon be in the cemetery . . . When next we meet I will make you gasp with what I shall tell you about the influences at work to queer our pitch *re* wages and recognition. My only regret is my health is not better and that I will not be able to continue the fight. I have been bruised in the fight of the past 11 years and apparently will have to become

a mere looker-on." His handwriting gets less sure and in December (when we were deeply engaged in our first wages campaign in London) he wrote: "I am sorry that Veitch, Foster and yourself are having such a hard time; my regret is I cannot share the burden. Excuse scrawl, as I am writing propped up on a couch." It was a long letter full of detail about the Union business of the moment, and it showed the man's invincible spirit. At Christmas he struggled to keep abreast of our big moves in London but confessed that he was "dreadfully groggy." He was "conscience-stricken" for breaking a promise to visit London, but his reason was that his lad, who spent his 21st birthday in the trenches in June, unexpectedly arrived home on leave, and a domestic flutter was hurriedly fixed up. In January there was the Infirmary and an operation. We were all distressed. In February came a pencilled note, barely legible, saying: "I was greatly touched by your last letter." He made a surprising appearance at the Leicester A.D.M. on March 28, and was re-elected hon. general secretary, but H. M. Richardson was appointed acting hon. gen. secretary, for Watts's strength was spent.

Watts was no stylist in composition, but he had a good homely vocabulary which admirably suited his work. He could clinch a point with a telling phrase and moreover, he had a useful turn of irony. Nowhere was this better displayed than in an article in the *Journal* of August, 1909, headed "Strange 'Proceedings,'" the last word being the title of the official organ of the Institute. Watts knew his Institute and his raillery had a sure touch. The article was anonymous, but was attributed to him. Having exposed Institute efforts to belittle the Union's services in the fields of litigation and legislation, he proceeded:

> We have no ill-will against the Institute. On the contrary we may again express our admiration of the thoroughness which it shows in that branch of its activities which has hitherto absorbed much of its energy; its work as a medium of social organisation. No one can glance through the programme of the Plymouth Wayzgoose, with its rich and abundant store of public and private hospitality, without feeling that all this represents a vast amount of organisation, and of patient, quiet and unostentatious diplomacy. And besides affording an enjoyable holiday, it is conceivable that a picnic of this sort, in which the journalist is permitted to rub shoulders with his betters, and to study the habits and customs of civilised society, may uplift the profession in the social scale, and help to the attainment of the "status" for which the heart of the Institute yearns.

We ourselves are not unmindful of the public position of the journalist, and some people may think that the important statutory rights the Union has secured in the Admission of the Press Act and the Children's Act raise the standing of the profession in the eyes of the public at least as much as the well-meant, but rather embarrassing, patronage of local dignitaries. But what we are concerned about most is what may be called the private status of the journalist, without which public status must be a mockery and a sham. What the Union has set itself to do, primarily, is to improve the economic position of the journalist. If the Institute cannot give any effective assistance—and we believe it is disabled both by its constitution and its traditions — would it not be more seemly of its governing body to leave off nagging those who can do, and are doing, the work? We wish the Institute well. Let it, at Plymouth, eat, drink and be merry.

Like other Union men, some of the leaders and many of the rank and file, Watts was an old member of the Institute. It was natural for men who believed in the power of association to join the only organisation of journalists that existed before 1907. It was equally natural that, as the failure of the Institute to grapple with the real problems of salaries and working conditions became increasingly evident, opinion among earnest reformers should swing round in favour of a body which would tackle grievances that urgently demanded redress. That inevitably meant a trade union. The conception in Watts's mind can be traced as far back as 1891. At the time he was chief reporter on the *Darwen News*, and the incident that seems to fix the matter was recorded in a letter some years ago written by E. Clementson, of Darwen, one of the secretary's old friends, which stated:

When Watts was laid low I stood by his graveside (in 1918), and I re-called the incident that really began our Union. It was a meeting of the Institute at Gregg's Hotel (then a leading hotel in Darwen) at which Watts and I, after talking the matter over, brought forward the position of the men out on strike from the *Preston Herald*. We were then told by Mr. Riley (proprietor of the *Darwen News* and other papers), our chairman, that the Institute could not interfere between employer and employed. Upon that some of us at once resigned from the Institute and we interviewed men at Bolton with a view to action being taken for the establishment of a union. Nothing came of it, but Watts never let the matter rest, and you know the sequel.

That strike at Preston caused some awakening, and over a wide area pressmen made weekly contributions to help the men in the dispute. When the chairman of the N.E. Lancashire branch of the Institute ruled that that body could not intervene in the dispute, a lot of hard thinking was created, and Watts and Clementson found a kindred spirit in F. Lamb, of Preston. They

actually got as far as sketching the constitution and rules of a trade union, but when they visited Bolton they were laughed at as visionaries. Even at Manchester, it is on record, they were received graciously at the Press Club, but the only support they got was coffee and other drinks. In 1899, when he was chief reporter on the *Blackburn Weekly Standard*, and also on the staffs of the now defunct *Lancashire Daily Express*, and the *Northern Daily Telegraph* (which latter office was to prove a Union stronghold), Watts urged upon those who served under him the need of a Union. He would describe the miserable conditions he found in some towns, and some of his friends were puzzled to know where he got all his information. He confided his aspirations to Philip Snowdon when he was a candidate for Blackburn in 1900 and after. Snowden referring to his intimate relations with "Tommy" Watts, said: "I remember how enthusiastically he used to talk about the project of a trade union for journalists. It seemed a hopeless thing in those days."

If the time was not yet ripe for a trade union, Watts apparently had some hope of reforming the Institute. The N. and E. Lancashire district, of which he had been chairman for a term, gave him a smoking cabinet in August, 1903, after his return to Manchester. In 1905 he moved a resolution at a meeting of the Manchester district of the Institute, in the following terms: "That in the best interests of the Institute it is undesirable that proprietors of newspapers and directors of newspaper companies should be elected to the presidency or to any other office; also that the Manchester district would favour an alteration of the by-laws which would prevent their admission to the Institute, and to secure that members becoming proprietors or directors should then become associates only." J. Slater, of Dartmouth, a Union member of long standing, proposed a somewhat similar motion, also in 1905, at a meeting of the Birmingham and Midland Counties District of the Institute, of which he was then joint hon. secretary. He was defeated, but he tells me that Watts's motion at Manchester was carried. There was evidently a good deal of anti-proprietor feeling in some Institute circles at that time. Manchester declined to support the nomination of Mr. Gratwicke, of Exeter, for the presidency of the Institute in 1905. Letters written by Institute officials show that the idea of "shelving" the proprietors was much discussed outside, but not inside, the meetings. Doubt was expressed whether the Privy Council would sanction any change in the Charter or by-laws which would

jeopardise the vested interests of the proprietor members. Some urged that it would be unfair to kick out the men who had, " some from the best of motives and some from motives of self-glorification," been doing the Institute work for many years. One Institute district secretary recommended that no more proprietor members should be elected and existing ones should not be appointed to any office, and should even be excluded from committees. He cited one district which had adopted this policy and said that if others followed " there would be an end to proprietorial government."

It is difficult to believe that Watts ever had an enemy, but he did have one. There was an unpleasant episode in 1916, when the writer of a letter in the *Newspaper World*, signed " N.U.J." said that the honorary officials of the Union were costing over £200 a year, and that about £450 a year was being paid " in honorary and professional salaries." The editor in a footnote said : " A salary list of £450 a year hardly strikes us as alarming in connection with an association now numbering more than 3,000 members." The insinuations of this anonymous writer were easily disposed of. The attack was malicious, and Watts was furious that anyone knowing the facts should be so mean. The upshot was that the writer, to avert legal action, apologised and paid £10 to a Union benevolent fund. The identity of the writer was known to the executive. He had been a member of the Union, but had gone over to the Institute. If ever anyone had a clear answer to a charge of self-seeking it was Watts, and the Union, in its insistence on some tangible though only partial recognition of the self-sacrificing work of years, knew that he had given far more than he had ever gained. In fact he lost, financially, for he had to give up valuable subsidiary sources of income when he became secretary. When Watts died H. M. Richardson wrote a touching and beautiful tribute in the *Journalist*. Speaking of that meeting at Manchester when the idea of the Union was first put forward, he wrote : " I recall the passionate indignation of one man who spoke of having himself gone through the mill of lowly-paid, over-worked journalism, and how he said he had made up his mind in those days that if ever the chance came he would devote himself to bettering the conditions of those who suffered similar hardship. That man was Watts. There was something humiliating to me in his enthusiasm for human beings." Referring to Watts's incapacity for sustained ill-feeling towards anyone, Richardson re-called the incident of the one enemy to

which I have just alluded. "Some years ago someone cruelly attacked him and the Union. His impulse—justifiable and proper—was publicly to expose his enemy. But then he remembered his enemy had a wife. That was sufficient for Watts. He was content with an anonymous apology and the payment of a small sum to the Widow and Orphan Fund. With no more than that he let the creature go free." In the words of a corporate appreciation Watts lived to see the beginnings of the triumph of his policy in the recognition of the Union by proprietors, and at any rate he succeeded beyond his own dreams; his work was to tell with increasing power as the years went by.

Another of the most prominent figures at the start was George Henderson Lethem, a Scot who found a second home at Leeds. Like certain other journalists of distinction he started as a compositor. This was at Dunfermline, his native place, in the office of the local *Press*. When the Union began he was chief sub-editor of the *Leeds Mercury*, and also when he was chosen for the presidency at the Leeds A.D.M., 1908. The actual formation of the Union at Birmingham in 1907 was moved by R. C. Spencer and seconded by Lethem, and the latter well earned the unique honour that fell to him of being President for three consecutive years. He was soon called upon to undertake duties in every way as onerous as the framing of rules which devolved upon him preparatory to the foundation conference. Following J. C. Menzies as general treasurer he pursued the task of getting the financial system into good running order. By that time he had become editor of the *Leeds Mercury* and although of opinion that technically under the rules he should have resigned he yielded to the united request of the Executive that he should continue his invaluable supervision of the finances. All the work of receiving contributions from the branches and paying benefits was done from the house in Leeds where he now lives, with the assistance of his younger son (now his only son, and his successor as householder there), until he went into the Army in 1914, and then of his daughter. They were rewarded by a payment of 2/6 a week—out of the Treasurer's own pocket. One has only to read the report of the A.D.M. at Manchester in 1912 to realise the magnitude of the responsibilities which Lethem shouldered. The Union in its fifth year was grappling with the complicated and troublesome problems involved in the operation of the National Insurance Act. As President, J. H. Harley had taken a close practical interest in this matter, and Lethem grappled

with the many points arising from the Union's recognition as an Approved Society under the Act. It meant the revision of Union contributions and benefits, the adaptation of rules. There was a big debate on the new scheme, which was largely due to the initiative of W. E. Perks, then a Trustee of the Union. Lethem carried the scheme through to adoption. Unfortunately for the Union, in 1916 Lethem had to resign his office owing to his appointment as managing editor of the *Daily Record*, Glasgow. He was able to hand over to the Central Office a system of financial administration which could be continued in operation without much change. The Executive expressed their feelings in an illuminated address, the terms of which were what the whole membership was saying. Referring to the presentation album the address said :

It is an inadequate endeavour to express to him the admiration which his work for the Union has won, and the personal esteem his character has created, among those whose pleasure it has been to co-operate with him, and whose task it will be to carry on the good work to which he so devotedly applied himself in the interests of the working journalists of Great Britain.

Mr. Lethem was President of the Union for three years in succession (1908-1911) and Honorary General Treasurer for four years (1912-1916). That, during these periods, the Union grew from a tender plant, needing careful nurture, to a stout tree capable of giving shelter in the heat of the day to more than 3,000 members, was due in large measure to Mr. Lethem's untiring enthusiasm, wise counsels, and unremitting energies in the cause with which, in our hearts, his name will ever be associated.

Signatures in the order in which they appear :—
W. Meakin, C. Hagon, F. Eccles, F. J. Mansfield, Geo. W. Egdell, J. A. Flanagan, H. M. Richardson, P. B. Jones, F. E. Hamer, M. Stuart, Alf. Martin, Thos. A. Roberts, T. Robinson, John Joss, J. Haslam, A. R. Brooks, F. W. H. Reed, Percy Clark, Alex. Peters, F. Judd, Wm. Veitch, J. E. Brown, Richard Ainger, William E. Pegg, Jas. H. Aitken, W. C. Hawthorne, F. G. Bunting, D. Welch, Ernest Williams, H. B. Moore, R. C. Spencer, Caleb Rees, Geo. Rye, James A. Walker, W. B. Proudfoot, W. N. Hallowell, W. E. Perks, W. N. Watts, W. T. A. Beare, John Smurthwaite, James C. Menzies, R. M. Comb, J. H. Harley, T. Foster.

In acknowledging the presentation Lethem declared that he should never lose his deep interest in the Union. He never did. He doubled his subscription, instead of paying the half rate provided for in the rule governing the status of those who became disqualified under Rule 1, which barred proprietors, managers or directors. He paid his contributions to the Central Office branch until he was able to resume full membership at Leeds in 1921.

Lethem remained in Glasgow until 1920, when he had the misfortune to fall under the displeasure of the late Lord Rothermere because of his connection with the Union, and left his employment. At the time this was a surprise to many of us, because Rothermere, like his brother Northcliffe, had expressed approval of our aims. Returning to Leeds, Lethem accepted an invitation to join the staff of the *Yorkshire Post* and there remained until 1931. Then he left to undertake the editorship of *Light*, which has been called "*The Times* of Spiritualism." It was intended as a first step towards retirement, but he kept on, although four years after moving to London he lost his wife. In September, 1941, he relinquished the post and returned to Leeds, but not yet to the leisure of retirement, though over 73 years of age. An earnest call came from W. L. Andrews, the editor of his old paper, now the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury*, for war time help, and so Lethem bends once more over the sub-editorial table, and is, as he says, "bucked by the discovery that I can still pull my weight in the night's work." A recent article in *Light* by H. F. Prevost Battersby, headed "Hail and Farewell: to George H. Lethem," explains how it came about that he took what to many, at a distance, seemed a novel course in 1931. It is explained that his "apprenticeship to spiritualism" had been in a way of long standing, going back to *Mercury* days and on through the time at Glasgow. "In December, 1917, his elder son John (Lieut., R.F.A.) was killed at Passchendaal and his second son, who had served in France, received a commission and was under orders to return to the Front. Overwhelmed by grief and anxiety, Mrs. Lethem was becoming seriously ill, obsessed by the picture of her son blown to pieces by a shell, and in no way helped by religious consolations." The article goes on to show how Mrs. Lethem was persuaded to take part in spiritualistic sittings in Glasgow "which, bringing her lost son indisputably back to her, cured her at once of her disastrous obsession." Under the persuasion of his wife Lethem took up platform work at spiritualist meetings in Glasgow, Manchester and London, his advocacy attracting big audiences. This sort of activity recalls the experiences of his youth, when, as a reporter on a Darlington paper, he was a friend of Mr. Arthur Henderson ("Uncle Arthur"). They several times spoke in company at temperance meetings. Both were ardent apostles of that cause, and Lethem could generally gain the closer attention of the audience than the man who became a Cabinet Minister. If Lethem had left journalism for politics,

what might not have happened? Some indication could be found in his financial speeches at A.D.M.'s, which might almost be compared with Parliamentary expositions. George Leach once paid him the compliment of saying: "You might have been the Financial Secretary to the Treasury explaining the Budget." His powers of effective appeal were never more forcibly shown than in his speech at the dinner in Fleet Street on the occasion of the London A.D.M. in 1909. It stands out in my own memory as a classic of Union advocacy at a time when the help of London in building up the young organisation was badly needed. He urged the well-placed men of London to come in and help their lower-paid provincial brothers. In response G. K. Chesterton and A. G. Gardiner joined the Union at the dinner table. As he truly says, he seems to have been pioneering most of his life. The fact that he was Chief Ruler of Durham County district of the Independent Order of Rechabites at the early age of 28 speaks for his capacity.

It would perhaps be incorrect to call Lethem a dour Scot, but nevertheless he exhibited on sufficient cause shown the native stubbornness and pertinacity of his race. This may be illustrated by two incidents in the long-drawn-out York dispute, which is referred to elsewhere. When negotiations at the beginning proved fruitless the Executive decided to call out the Union members of the staff of the *Yorkshire Herald*. Lethem disagreed with this step on the ground that the funds of the Union were insufficient to ensure that the men, most of whom were married, would be fully compensated, and that the Union should not ask them to bring disaster on themselves and their families. This objection was overruled and the strike was called. A remarkable incident was the sequel at a subsequent A.D.M. As General Treasurer Lethem conceived it to be his duty to call attention to the long-continued drain on the funds caused by payments to a man who went to the *Herald* after the strike began and was induced to come out on promise of payment equivalent to his salary. Lethem protested and quoted a saying of Campbell-Bannerman's: "Stop fooling and face the facts." He moved a resolution, which was seconded. Then Watts took the floor against him and carried the conference so completely that when the vote came the Treasurer found himself in a minority of one, for even his seconder forsook him. This was the only occasion, Lethem believes, when Watts and he were opposed on any matter of policy. After the vote Lethem rose to carry on his job as Treasurer and naturally

began with a reference to his overwhelming defeat. Then, to his astonishment, the Conference, led by Watts, rose and gave him the greatest ovation he ever received. Further, Watts made an emotional speech, in which he could excel, saying all manner of kind things regarding Lethem and his work for the Union. " That scene," Lethem writes, " comes back to me very clearly and will, I think be one of the memories I shall cherish right on to the end of the road. I was fortunately able to find jobs for two of the senior members of the *Herald* staff—Andrew Still and another whose name I cannot recall. What I do remember about him is that, for some reason, he wrote to me upbraiding me for having caused him to lose his job, which, in the circumstances, was rather ironical."

Strong men were needed at the helm of the Union ship when it set sail on its adventurous voyage. A third was found in R. C. Spencer, who was chosen for the first President. I see well his robust figure as I pen this record. He hardly seemed of the journalist type—more like a jolly farmer, stout of speech and manner, or an old sea-salt with yarns to spin of the Spanish Main. But the fact that he held the post of chief reporter of the *Manchester Guardian* for many years with distinction is sufficient proof of the wisdom of those who called him to be their first leader. A keen naturalist, he loved, and wrote about, birds and flowers (C. P. Scott called him " a second Jefferies ") and it has been truly said of him that he was equally profound in his knowledge of men and affairs. His ripe wisdom at the age of 57, perfected by a wide experience of public activities, was of the highest value in Union counsels. He was level-headed, and impervious to sentiment, when facts, favourable or the reverse, had to be judged and acted upon. Strong of lung, his voice carried weight in more senses than one. Nervous delegates at meetings with " Daddy " Spencer (as he was affectionately known) in the chair, stood rather in awe of this ruthless ruler of debates. This appears from the various accounts of the inaugural Birmingham Conference. In his anxiety to get on with the business there he at first refused to accept the West Riding amendments to the draft rules submitted from Manchester. Lethem met this tense position with a due show of deference to the chair, but with a pawky persistence that obtained Spencer's permission for him to state his case. H. M. Richardson once told how at the 1908 A.D.M. Spencer ruled him out of order every time he rose to propose something he was keen on, " but he did it in the kindest

possible manner and I daresay he knew better what was for the good of the Union than I did." It must not be forgotten that one of the chief obstacles in the way of the new movement —indeed it has never vanished entirely down to the present time—was the innate prejudice of so many journalists against trade unionism as the remedy for their own ills. They were professional men, and it was not quite "respectable." The best antidote to this was the support of men of position; thus the active participation of Spencer, a "big pot" in the North, Watts, a Manchester chief, and Lethem, of similar rank in Leeds, was of prime importance. These three, not to name many others, had accepted the trade union solution. Spencer had been in intimate touch with trade unionism in the course of his work. This is brought out in a little sketch sent by Charles E. Turner, one of my co-trustees of the Union. He writes:

The idea of forming a trade union for working journalists had been germinating in Manchester for more than a year before the first meeting was held to give it practical effect. Personal recollections, and probably history, attribute the earliest promptings to R. C. Spencer, the *Guardian's* chief reporter—news editor as it is now called, when the office has devolved upon another good trade unionist, H. D. Nichols (President of the Union in 1929). Spencer used regularly to attend the meetings of the Manchester and Salford Trades Council in or about 1906, and almost as regularly he was accompanied on the job by Ben Leech, for years now a *Guardian* reporter, but in those days on the staff of the *Manchester City News*. They sat together facing the chairman and secretary, and Leech's recollection is that, as the business dragged on, Spencer would lean over the table and whisper audibly: "Now, Mr. Chairman, I think we've had enough of this discussion. We don't want to spend all night here. How if you put the resolution?" And the chairman would invariably oblige at the first opportunity. As they left these meetings R. C. would frequently say: "You know, we ought to have a trade union. It's ridiculous for journalists to think that trade unionism is beneath them. It's just as necessary for them as for all the other sorts of workers." There was talk, too, of the inadequacies of the Institute. Once when leaving the Trades Council Spencer and Leech came upon a *Manchester Courier* sub-editor on the Piccadilly "flags." It was a wretchedly wet night. "What, have you nothing to do, then?" was the question and the *Courier* man replied: "Well truth to tell, I haven't. You see nobody has had a night off for months at our place and I've been given one and don't know what to do with it, so I thought I would just turn into the office and see the others work." As they moved on Spencer said to Leech: "Aye! We want a Union, don't we?" About that time, too, Spencer was very friendly with Mr. Arthur Henderson, who was frequently in Manchester on the business of the National Union of Foundry Workers. "There's Arthur," R. C. would exclaim from the top of a tram car and they would

join company, and talk of trade unionism. No doubt Mr. Henderson's influence and advice was helpful at the right moment.

As far as itinerant propaganda was concerned I do not think that Spencer was as active as Watts and others, but he did attend meetings in East Lancashire, and his name also figured in Union toasts in the far South. He probably looked after his health more carefully than Watts, for it is notorious that Watts neglected both his health and his immediate personal interests and advancement in his devotion to the infant union. A glimpse of Spencer's social side is given in "Paper Chase," James Dunn's book of reminiscences. Telling of his experiences in Manchester of men of the *Guardian* school he says: "There was R. C. Spencer, one of the men who founded the National Union of Journalists, a great newspaperman and one of the most expert poker-players I have ever met." After he retired from active work at Manchester Spencer took a house at Streatham and joined the Central London branch, where his voice was occasionally heard. I was then living at Dulwich and Spencer and I were in touch on the trustee business of the Union. He died in 1921, a notable year in the history of his old paper, for the *Guardian* then reached its centenary and Mr. C. P. Scott's fiftieth year of editorship. When the Union celebrated its coming-of-age in 1928 Manchester branch held its own dinner to mark the occasion. Mr. C. P. Scott, in responding to the toast of "The Guests," said he felt he had a particular association with the Union, first because it started in their office and secondly because its first President was his very old friend, R. C. Spencer. "Of all the pioneers," he added "R.C. was among the greatest. I take a great amount of credit in regard to him because he was one of my discoveries. I should like to think that R.C. is not far away from this gathering, wearing his jolly, benevolent smile, his somewhat dishevelled attire, and his coat off. He would be proud to think of what had come of his work, and the great honour you have done to me." Spencer was fitly called the Union's grand old veteran.

The dominant figure in the history of the Union viewed as a whole, is that of Henry Marriott Richardson. When a young man, making a name as a clever writer, he took part in the preliminary steps towards a Union in Manchester in 1906, and from thence onwards he never lost official touch with the body which he was to serve as its leading spokesman. When illness overtook Watts the supervision of head office affairs fell to the lot mainly of Richardson and James Haslam; then Richardson

was appointed acting secretary until his election by ballot in 1918 as the first salaried whole-time general secretary. This office he held until his death at the age of 60 in 1937. The merit of his service in the Union's chief post is worthily recorded in the following resolution of the first succeeding A.D.M.:

At this first meeting representative of the whole membership of the National Union of Journalists since the death of our colleague, H. M. Richardson, we place on record our sense of the irreparable loss the Union has suffered. His whole-hearted devotion to the Union, his invaluable work, and his achievements in the cause of the Union during 30 years of unremitting service, are something which will not be forgotten by any of those whom he so faithfully served. In H. M. Richardson every working journalist has lost not only a trusted colleague, but a friend and a brother, and we pledge ourselves to continue his work in a way that will be worthy of his memory.

Richardson was born at Bolton and had the law in his blood, for his grandfather was a prominent solicitor in that town and his father was a barrister. It is not surprising that when the responsibility came he proved a dexterous advocate, and displayed the acumen of a legal mind, in each Union *cause célèbre*. One attendant at the earliest meetings, in which Richardson took an unobtrusive part, has the recollection of a long-haired dark young man who objected to a sentence in which somebody had split an infinitive, that being his sole contribution to the discussion. He started in journalism at Hanley on the *Staffordshire Sentinel* in 1894, and used to tell of his reporting experiences there. From 1899 to 1904 he was at Birmingham on the *Gazette*, four years as a sub-editor and the last as assistant editor and leader writer. Then to Manchester on the *Daily Dispatch;* and in 1905-9, literary editor and leader writer on the *Manchester Evening Chronicle*. For the next eight years he was mainly a free lance, but he acted as a special commissioner for the *Sunday Chronicle*, and wrote with the pseudonym of "Dux" in that paper. In 1910 he was concerned in an illustrated satirical venture called *Laughter*, which had the sub-title "grim and gay," and was intended as a rival to *Punch*. He also figured as a playwright, and later wrote two thrillers, "The Temple Murder" and "The Rock of Justice." He sent me the latter for review in the *Journalist* and one of my comments was: "We have long suspected H.M.R. of a gift for telling the tale, but in another *role* than that of the novelist." He was versatile, and a nimble writer— always fluent, often witty and sometimes brilliant. He edited the official organ of the Union from its establishment

in 1908 to 1919, when I was elected to succeed him, he then being the General Secretary, and did valiant work for the Union with his pen on occasion in that organ. He had lackadaisical periods which were reflected in unattractive issues. Hence in the year when I was vice-president I would get a note like this from my superior officer: "*Re* Journal, it is a pity Watts sticks up for Richardson so. He must see what an idle beggar he is. There was an improvement last month, but that is always so, as soon as someone starts complaining. The idea is to blame the printer, but that won't do. The printer does what he is told to do, or if not he should be put in his place. What a pity it is that when R. offered to resign, he was not taken at his word." That was a rather stiff rebuke from a man who was not a patch on Richardson as a journalist, but a better man of business. He put his finger on one of Richardson's weak spots. But when the editor did wake up he atoned for his slackness.

In these little squabbles I was in the confidence of both sides, and as a counterblast to the above would get a complaint from Richardson that so-and-so had a habit of asking people to do things without consulting him as editor: "I don't mind, but it is inevitable that occasionally there will be overlapping." No public organ, I suppose, was ever yet run without this kind of by-play. My file of letters reveals many piquant little passages, but this is not the place for them. One amusing missive came from Richardson when he was seeking outlets for his literary products: "Dear Mansfield, It is very good of you to take so much trouble with me. I shall have a shot at *The Times* when I have absorbed the spirit of the specimens you sent. Apparently the great thing is to be gentlemanly, mildly metaphorical, carefully casual, and unprovocative. I'm afraid that last qualification will get me down. Provocation is my favourite pastime—at least that's what a lot of people seem to think—altho' I hate provoking people. I will let you know when I send anything. Just at present I'm concentrating my fire on *Punch*. Don't know yet whether I've got the range. Many thanks." It should be added that one of his articles got accepted, and he made fun to me over the only passage which was sub-edited "in order to make it more respectable by the inclusion of a Latin tag."

There is no harm in confessing at this distance of time that when Richardson was running for the secretaryship in 1918, and it was evident that he would be the winner in the ballot, some of us were concerned about his lack of aptitude for office methods

and routine. Like many a brilliant journalist, these things were irksome to him, but they were an important element in secretarial efficiency. A sign of this weakness was soon manifested to me. Just after the London A.D.M. in 1919, when I was in the chair as President, he sent me this note: "I shall be awfully obliged if you let me have your notes of last Thursday's E.C. meeting. I never found my note book with the minute notes in. Fortunately there was nothing of great importance but I want to make as careful a record as possible. Of course the Wages Committee minutes went also. Congratulations on your conduct of the A.D.M. It was generally admired." He knew, of course, of my habit of making notes of all proceedings I attended, and I was glad to help him. At that time before he had broken himself in to the full duties of secretaryship, such a misfortune was more symptomatic than solitary, but responsibility cured him of such failings, and he lived to earn the most glowing tributes to his efficiency. The manner of his election gave him every encouragement to do his best. There were seven candidates and the ballot was on the exhaustive, or contingent vote plan. The result of the first count was as follows:—H. M. Richardson, 766; C. P. Robertson, 461; Percy Rudd, 172; J. E. Brown, 169; T. A. Davies, 114; T. A. Roberts, 87; W. Armitage, 47. On this system when the top man has not received an absolute majority a second count is made, the lowest man is eliminated and the second preferences on his papers allocated to the other candidates. At the fifth count on this system the totals were:—Richardson, 931; Robertson, 548; Brown, 210. The first named was found to have an absolute majority of 86, *i.e.*, an excess of 86 over one half of the total valid votes cast. Members on foreign service in the War voted in considerable numbers. Richardson acknowledged this "vote of confidence" in the good sporting spirit he ever showed: "I have won from as good or better men because I had an initial advantage in being in possession of the post. That thought will keep me properly humble when the mere figures would make me too Lucifer-like." The advantage referred to was the fact that when Watts was getting seriously ill we agreed to his suggestion that Richardson should sign letters as "acting secretary," and that was confirmed by the 1918 A.D.M. at Leicester by a formal appointment in that capacity.

The main criticism of Richardson during the whole of his Union career was that he was a pronounced "left winger."

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Union career was that he was a pronounced "left winger"

The membership on the right, a large but often inactive body so far as attendance at meetings was concerned, called him a "Red," a revolutionary, a "Bolshie." Everyone knew, of course, that he was a Socialist, and he was popular in the ranks of the Left—not perhaps a very large section, though at some conferences they became vocal in debate and had their fling afterwards at midnight, when the strains of the Red Flag might be heard from an effervescent little group. The preponderant moderate opinion recognised Richardson's sterling qualities and his constant and sincere effort to act with wisdom and discretion as the instrument of the whole Union. It was only in times of real crisis, like a general strike or the move to affiliate with organised labour, that there was any great fear of the secretary's tendencies. One former President puts the position rather well: "The Union lost nothing by the fact that Richardson was at heart a revolutionary. In fact it gained. The fact that he was aware of his own extremist desires made Richardson the more careful in committing the Union." In my experience of him, and naturally that was very close over a period of several years, I found that he was most anxious to promote the strength, welfare and unity of the organisation he was serving. In his writings, as is well known, he was a never-failing advocate of the policies of "ginger," and he never could resist the temptation to make the flesh of the timorous creep. But really he was quite a good natured, reasonable fellow, who was always anxious to concert, and work for, measures for the general good.

His aim always was constructive statesmanship as against destructive revolution, and his work on the Joint Industrial Council for the Printing and Allied Trades, was a good demonstration of that. In fact he made a notable pronouncement in this sense at the annual convention of the J.I.C. in 1929, in a paper on "The Economic Problems of the Printing Industry." The problem common to all, he said, was how to make the industry pay. His friends among the master printers and the newspaper proprietors would be quite satisfied with that proposition, and some of his friends on the other side would also agree provided he added, as he thought he ought to add, that it should pay not only in profit to the employer, but also in health and happiness to the people employed. He frankly owned that there were no sweated workers nowadays in the print industry—no, not even among the journalists. Facing larger issues he hoped that the J.I.C. might play a great part in the rationalisation of industry,

and some of them believed that the real object of that process was to bring into being a more rational system of society which would not permit of poverty or unemployment unless it be self-imposed by the idleness or indifference of the individual who suffered it. He dealt with recent cases in which firms had been bought out and closed down, and pleaded powerfully for compensation to displaced workers who had contributed more to a business than those who invested money and got it all back in interest, plus a big capital return when the sale was effected. Instances of this injustice, he protested, made some " see red." I quote this at some length as an exposition of Richardson's social gospel, which scarcely any member of the Union would contest.

Whatever the fears or resentments sometimes caused by his political and economic doctrines, Richardson had his full share of encomiums. In 1930 he was elected chairman of the Joint Industrial Council, which has done important work in peacefully settling disputes in the industry. Its jurisdiction covers the provincial, but not the London, newspapers. Our secretary's elevation was the first time a working journalist had been placed at the head of conciliation machinery for the big industry of which we form a part. " The honour," said the *Journalist*, " is one that the Union may well accept, because the Union has provided the training ground for one of the most astute trade union secretaries in the country." Mr. E. H. Tillett, President of the Newspaper Society, said that no man could be more acceptable to his colleagues of the Society than Richardson, who had shown his willingness to give as well as to take ; he would bring to the office high judicial capacity. At this time Richardson held a post of even wider distinction. He was president for 1930-32 of the Federation Internationale des Journalistes. In a little booklet published by the Federation Richardson had an article on the Court of Honour formed by the I.F.J., to restrain offences against journalistic ethics which endanger international good will. He welcomed it as " a first move towards making journalists realise that it is as immoral to ' frame up ' a case against a foreign country as it is to tell lies about one's townsmen." At the 1932 A.D.M. an unusual distinction was conferred on Richardson, in the presentation of a medal to commemorate his 25th A.D.M., and his presidency of the I.F.J. It was stated that he was the one member of the Union who had attended every A.D.M. from the start. The presentation evoked a scene of enthusiasm among delegates unequalled at any conference. The above record brings

up some interesting points mentioned by Richardson in a sketch of " The jolly A.D.M. at Leamington " in 1931 : " On the way back from Leamington Walter Meakin and I discovered that this was our 24th consecutive A.D.M. ; that neither of us had ever missed an A.D.M. since the year One in Union chronology ; that he had missed only three executive meetings and I had missed only two."

If Watts, with his warm and elemental human sympathies, was the best type for the fostering of the Union in its childhood, Richardson, with his stronger intellectual grip, was the better suited for days of combat and aggression. Richardson had to take the lists as the champion of a united and determined body of workers ready to strike for economic justice. But he was sometimes harassed by the dread that there might be some unreality in this, and that the weapons he so bravely flourished might not prove entirely sound in the conflict. If he sometimes had to practice a little bluffing—and what leader on either side in industrial issues does not?—he would be oppressed by the fear that it might fail, and that the essential backing might not be forthcoming. That sort of guile is really not good for the soul of any leader, and sometimes I thought I could see its effect on Richardson in traces of bitterness and cynicism. It was, however, a rare and passing phase. A success for the Union, or any bit of good news about it, would restore his natural balance, and he would ever keep to his text of the need of unity and the fighting spirit. In a letter of good wishes to me on succeeding to the editorship of the *Journalist* in 1919, he enclosed a group photograph of his children, a hopeful and promising array. " What do you think of the prize fighter in the middle ? " he asked. " Four years old, takes a man's seven in hats. He's what they call a nut. I'm as proud of him as I am of the Union. Only he's got more backbone . . . though the Union is coming along pretty well."

At that time he was deeply involved in national wage questions. National minimum rates for the provincial dailies and weeklies had been agreed to by the proprietors, but there was wide dissatisfaction and arbitration was looming on the horizon. Richardson was facing his biggest task and craved for all the moral support he could get and to which he was entitled. He had plenty of material for the preparation of our case and he handled it well. When the great day came Richardson rose to his opportunity in splendid style and realised his greatest achievement. Tom Foster (then Honorary General Treasurer ; President 1941), who was there,

afterwards said: "No counsel at the English Bar could have conducted the case, with the cross-examination of opposing witnesses, in more masterly style." As another eye-witness I agree. Soon after, 1921-2, his resources were to meet a not dissimilar test in the fusion conference with the Institute of Journalists, an effort which failed but was to be renewed some years later. On both occasions Richardson displayed grip and insight and readiness of the highest order.

When in 1929 the question of the Secretary's salary was under discussion Sir Robert Donald, an ex-President of the Institute of Journalists, wrote to the *Newspaper World* expressing amazement "that there is a movement to reduce that gentleman's remuneration." In the next sentence he toned down "movement" to "suggestion" and said that whoever was responsible for it could have little appreciation of Richardson's services, or knowledge of the strenuous work involved in building up a new organisation. "The secretaryship of a professional body like the Institute or the Union," he said, "should be equal to the position of editor or manager of a newspaper of the first rank. In either capacity Mr. Richardson's remuneration would be very much higher than it is. If he were only to obtain five per cent. of the increased salaries which he has been the means of securing for working journalists, Mr. Richardson would be a very rich man to-day."

This was a new note from an unexpected source. It reminded us of the testimony of Mr. George Springfield, the well known Institute man, after the fusion conference in 1921-2. He said that those who met the Union executive on that occasion "were increasingly impressed with the complete predominance of their able secretary, Mr. Richardson."

A place may properly be given here to a few notes about some of the men who participated in the earliest meetings in Manchester and the North. James C. Menzies, the first General Treasurer of the Union, was an unobtrusive member, but a staunch trade unionist. He was on the staff of the old *City News*, of Manchester, for 33 years, and served on the Manchester branch committee throughout until his death. W. C. Hawthorn, for many years on the *Northern Daily Telegraph*, was one of the earliest members of the Executive. T. W. Rowbottom, who was also on the first Executive, was for 25 years on the *Nottingham Journal*, and formed the Union branch in that place. James Heddle, one of the founders, was chief sub-editor of the *Daily Dispatch*, and moved

to London in 1911 to become editorial chief of the Hulton publications there before they developed into Allied Newspapers. With him in his transfer to London went Edith Shackleton Heald (to become chairman of the Central London branch) and H. G. Lane (later editor of Northcliffe Newspapers). Heddle became a popular and influential figure in high newspaper circles, until ill-health forced his retirement some years ago. He died in 1941. During our negotiations with the Newspaper Proprietors' Association in 1917 and later, resulting in our London agreements, Heddle was always felt to be a "friend at Court," and in conversations I had with him after the formal meetings, it was helpful to note his understanding approach to problems which particularly affected his own publications, such as the position of staffs in offices where various papers were produced. W. E. Hindle, a founder and representative of East Lancs. on the Executive, found his way to Fleet Street and the Central London branch. J. S. Panton was a staunch lieutenant to Watts and proved a great Union champion in missionary work in places where talk about the Union at one time caused apprehensions. His faith gave courage to many timid ones. He was an active advocate of the closer co-ordination of small branches and the formation of district councils, and was the first chairman of the North Western District Council. W. T. A. Beare, who died about the same date as Watts, was president of the Union in 1913. For several years he was chief sub-editor of the *Birmingham Gazette;* later he was prominent in sporting journalism in London, and an early worker in the Central London branch. References are made elsewhere to Frank H. Rose, but his vital work in the creation of the Union demands a chapter to itself and that follows.

CHAPTER IV.

A CLARION CALL: A NATIONAL MANIFESTO.

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife,
Throughout the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

ALTHOUGH a sense of injustice and revolt was rankling in the hearts of many journalists up and down the land, some power was needed to direct it into the channel of action. This was provided in the popular Socialist organ, the *Clarion*, started by Robert Blatchford in 1891. Under his vigorous direction it had become a political and literary force, and it now opened its columns to the advocacy of a trade union for journalists. This was the first public expression of the new spirit awakening in the ranks of journalism. Frank H. Rose set the ball rolling in the trade union letter which he regularly contributed. In Manchester, where he was doing journalistic work, he was in touch with men who were thinking on those lines, and his own earlier experience of trade unionism in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (now the Amalgamated Engineering Union) made him an informed exponent of their aspirations. He was a clear and forcible writer and put the case for a trade union for journalists with much cogency. Thus his service was a signal one, though it did not justify his description in a reference book as the " founder of the N.U.J." He was one of the group of determined and forward-looking men who set the movement going and his articles sounded the requisite rallying note.

" A Trade Union for Journalists? " was the bold heading of an article by Rose in the *Clarion* of July 27, 1906. Here was a matter of singular interest to trade unionists, he said, and he approached it with some hesitation, " for it is a somewhat delicate subject." His text was a complaint, made at a meeting of the Manchester district of the Institute of Journalists, that Labour Members of Parliament " were doing the recognised work of ordinary journalists." Rose was by trade an engineer and for seven years had earned his living at journalism. He had a close

knowledge of trade unionism but his acquaintance with real newspaper work might be termed superficial. He had a special interest in the Manchester protest because, in addition to his links with journalism, he was one of the candidates for Parliament put forward by the A.S.E. His comprehension of the grievance stated was explained as follows:

It did not refer to the writing of signed special articles, which were placed by editors with men who were supposed to have special knowledge, but to everyday routine work that reporters and linage men were always in the habit of doing. As far as I can judge, there has been no claim that journalism is a close profession or that no one should enter it except by the avenue of apprenticeship. There are many professional journalists in my circle of personal acquaintances, and nowhere have I found any disposition to be arbitrary or exclusive. What is claimed is that a line should be drawn somewhere, and the interests of the poorest class of newspaper writers protected in some way. The newspaper men are beginning to recognise that, after all, they are only a body of men who have to live by working in a newspaper factory and that a newspaper factory differs in no essential from any other sort of factory. Yet they seem to recognise, too, that their trade is up to certain limits an open one: and that it would be unwise, even if it were possible, to make it a close one: say, like boiler-making or bricklaying.

There was no suggestion that the work of the Labour M.P.'s was being done under price; there was indeed no recognised scale of prices. Admitting that the practice might be sufficiently extensive to make a reasonable ground of complaint, Rose came to the core of his article with this question: "If the working journalists were organised in a recognised trade union would the rest of the trade-union world permit such a grievance to exist?" Long in advance of the event he was thus foreshadowing some of the controversies that were to engage the attention of the N.U.J. One sound principle in that day of nebulous ideas he clearly laid down. He told of one of the best Labour men in the House who, when offered a highly lucrative commission from a great daily paper, refused it off-hand on the ground "that our fellows ought to earn their living one way or another." Thus any man might work at any calling that was left open by those who lived by it, but "he ought not to work at two." Rose did not claim originality for his suggestion, for it had been discussed by groups of journalists here and there, but he performed the valuable service of crystallising these vague hopes in print in a national organ. Effectively summing up the position as he then saw it, he concluded:

A real live union of working journalists is by no means outside the region of possibility. The need for some active association of this class of news-

paper workers has become more and more apparent of late years. The power of the great offices grows apace, and with this growth there comes an all-round worsening of working conditions. I have seen some ominous changes of method, as affecting the literary staffs of the modern publications in the seven years that I have known them. If the average journalist will shed the silly notion that he is a superior sort of special creation, and accept the bitter fact that he is just a working man, he will make it easier. There are hundreds of reporters and sub-editors who work longer hours for far less pay than the lino operator or even the machineman in the cellar. He can put as much professional side on as he chooses, but he will keep going down industrially until he substitutes commonsense for vanity. I wonder if the great typographical associations can see any possibilities in a suggestion for helping to organise the journalists. The idea is not half so fantastical as it seems at first.

In the *Clarion* of August 10, 1906, Rose developed his theme more positively. A correspondence in the *Newspaper Owner* (later the *Newspaper World*) convinced him that the position of journalists was really worse than most outsiders thought. The average wage, he learned, of the " working journalist " approximated to 30/- a week, the professional consolation for this being simply that it was paid as " salary," and not as common " wages "; he spoke of his employment as an " engagement " and not a common or garden " job." There was no limit on hours, " but as a professional person, he does not mind a little extra effort for a good, kind master—or should I say ' principal '? " Rose had discovered " a strong feeling that the shadowy organisation called ' the Institute ' should be moulded into a militant association on more or less trade union lines. At present the Institute is nothing but the formal expression of ' professional ' sentiment. Among its members are a good many proprietors, though that is not the most fatal objection to it. It is based upon the theory that the journalist is not a workman but a sort of special creation." On this subject his conclusion was that it was a waste of time to try to " modernise their antique Institute." Only a trade union could stop the rot in journalism. The old-fashioned office, whose proprietors were considerate, generous and sympathetic, was vanishing. " Every day you can read advertisements for journalists, who are required to perform the most outrageous tasks for the paltriest pay: to report, sub-edit, write ' bright pars.,' read proofs, and canvass for advertisements, all for wages that an artisan would scorn." From his own trade, the aristocracy of the mechanical world, Rose drew a suggestive parallel. Operative engineers had broadened the basis of their industrial organisation by admitting to membership the draughtsmen who

began the work of the engine shop in the drawing office. Why should not the great printing trades, on the same principle, include working journalists in their ranks. If this was "too tall an order" let the journalists have their own exclusive union "till experience counsels a further step." Thirteen years later that step was taken in the decision to affiliate to the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation.

As might be expected a large correspondence was provoked by Rose's essays. In some cases, he said, the writers put in a pathetic plea for "strict confidence," from the fear that their employers might know that they were connected with the new agitation. Referring doubtless to the definite movement beginning at Manchester he said that a scheme was being prepared and soon a definite start would be made. Meanwhile Rose himself came under fire as an engineer and Labour candidate who was accused of blacklegging journalists, as also were Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and others. One issue raised was the definition of "journalist." Edmund S. Bardsley, of Rotherham, wrote that there were three main classes of writers for newspapers —(1) reporters or news gatherers, (2) journalists, or writers of (more or less) original matter; (3) contributors, or occasional correspondents on special subjects. His contention was that reporters, who produced the indispensable news, were the men who needed a union, whereas the journalists and contributors, (exalted beings who battened on the reporters' labours) had no such need. He admitted that many reporters called themselves journalists; this arose, not from vanity, but from lack of self-respect. Another correspondent contested all this and argued that "a journalist is a man who has served his period of probation to the calling and now devotes his whole time to it, and makes it his living, be he 'common' reporter, sub-editor, assistant editor, leader writer or editor."

Rose reserved his fire for a time and then on October 5 he faced his critics. "I am not a 'blackleg' journalist. I am legitimately exercising a calling to which I have as good a right as any man who began in 'the corridor.' . . . Since I first began I have earned my living exclusively by newspaper writing." But all this is a side issue and need not be pursued. In the same number the editor, Alex M. Thompson, had a column on the subject, in which he pleasantly observed that the threatened degeneration into futile personalities might produce some profit if it led to the establishment of a real trade union for those news-

paper workers whose conditions of labour were uniform enough to admit of combination. This qualification marked Thompson's foreshadowing of basic difficulties. A union could and should regulate the output, hours and wages of men producing precisely similar cloth, coals or bricks, " but it can impose no equality of conditions on workers in the infinitely varied industries of science, imagination and art. The two-foot rule cannot appraise the value of a poem or a painted sky—nor even of a newspaper article. Neither can trade union law restrict the output of a Shakespeare, a Turner, or a Wagner—nor even of young Suthers." (the *Clarion* writer). If journalism be held to embody the trinity of intangibles here specified that may well account for some of the problems with which the N.U.J. has had to wrestle.

A reasoned letter on the case for a union signed " A Lancastrian in London," the writer of which we now know to be David Berry, was quoted by Thompson in the column of October 5. Berry, who was then on the staff of the *Kentish Independent*, Woolwich, was on the verge of taking practical steps. His proposition was that " an organisation, working on purely trade union lines—like the Law Society and the Pharmaceutical Society—is needed to protect reporters and sub-editors and to the exclusion of both proprietors and editors." There should be two sections, one for reporters and the other for sub-editors, with graded wages minima for daily and weekly papers, in town and country. Each district might fix its own minima. " There is an Institute of Journalists," wrote Berry, " which is supposed to look after the interests of working Pressmen—and of this I am a member—but it is an obsolete and useless institution, at which nine out of every ten reporters and ' subs ' sneer." This was a little exaggeration, but there was undoubtedly a growing revolt in the minds of journalists who gave any thought to organisation. The presence of proprietors in the Institute, he said, was the first cause of its failure to protect the workers ; and then (a point of substance) " every Tom, Dick and Harry who claims to have something to do with journalism." Some, out of false pride and windy notions about class distinctions, jeered at the idea of a trade union ; others, fat and contented in good berths, recked little of their fellows ; others were too Bohemian to trouble about protecting their own interests ; others were too fagged after a long day's work to enter into the subject ; and others again despaired of ever bringing the profession back into the prosperity it enjoyed 20 or 30 years ago. " Ah ! ", he exclaimed, " if only we had formed a trade union

then ! . . . The Harmsworth-cum-Pearson class could not have ridden rough-shod over the faces of the working pressmen, and initiated the policy of picking a man's brains in a short time by pressure of work, and then flinging him on the dust heap, a miserable mental ruin whom few respectable journals will look at."

"Manchester and Birmingham are most favourable for the start, for they have more backbone than a good many districts, and happiest of all, they are imbued with the trade union spirit. London is almost hopeless, but there are scores in the Metropolis who would join the new movement and the rest would follow as soon as they realised its effectiveness. Personally, I think I could promise at least 20 members in South-East London." Thompson asked for suggestions, urged the calling of meetings and promised his help.

The quarrel about Labour "blacklegs" gave an opening, not to be missed, to the leaders of the Institute for a blow at the new movement which threatened their placid monopoly. Early in October appeared an article in the *Daily Chronicle*, London (then edited by Mr., afterwards Sir, Robert Donald, a future President of the Institute), by "a member of the Council of the Institute of Journalists." It was a strong attack on "Blackleg M.P.s." The two chief charges were that one Labour man was so absorbed in his press work that he utterly neglected his Parliamentary duties, and that another had been soliciting work at 5/- per column. Rose had a two-column defence of the accused in the *Clarion* of October 19. About 30 Labour leaders were involved, including Messrs. F. Maddison, J. Havelock Wilson, Isaac Mitchell, Snowden, Clynes, Walsh, O'Grady, A. Henderson and J. Hodge. It was admitted that these men were "on trial," and Rose fairly and ably dealt with the various aspects of a complicated issue. The *Chronicle* writer exempted Rose from his list of blacklegs, because he was not yet an M.P., paid an official salary by his party, and therefore at liberty to practise his journalism. That admission blunted the spearhead of the writer's assault on the man who was organising a trade union for journalists. But Rose took full advantage of the opportunity to discuss the relations between Fleet Street and the new party on the Parliamentary horizon.

Now comes an important date—October 20, 1906—when a large meeting of journalists of the Manchester area declared in favour of the formation of "an Association of Working Journalists" and appointed a committee to draft a preliminary scheme. "The

working journalists' trade union is launched" was the opening sentence of Rose's "Trade Union Letter" in the *Clarion* of October 26. "The Manchester men met and affirmed the principle of trade unionism as applicable to the calling, and appointed a committee, composed of pressmen who have all served a formal apprenticeship." A pretty touch of orthodoxy, followed by the note that "there is, therefore, no question of interlopers and blacklegs to discuss." Rose gave the warning that the fortune of the venture could only be determined by the vital spirit and earnestness of the workers. With justice he laid stress on the brotherly spirit of the prime movers. "It is singular," he said, "that all the men who attended the inaugural meeting are men who are in berths that, from the point of view of pay and hours, may be said to be fairly comfortable. That the necessity of a trade union effort should appeal to them is a demonstration that the broadening spirit of the times has made them look beyond their individual and immediate interest. I should have liked some of the superior critics of this movement to have heard the early experiences of men who have struggled out of the depths into a tolerable life. It would do some of our artisan friends good to learn that they do not bear all the industrial burdens of the hour. When I see a crowd of men giving up the only leisured night of their week to discuss the possibility of bettering the conditions of poorer men than themselves I know that the right spirit and the true ring of human sympathy are there." There was of course another motive which the realist could not ignore, and that was "a proper and laudable element of self-interest." Bad conditions suffered by others were a standing menace and constant peril to those who, in the present, might be better off.

On November 9, 1906, Rose briefly notes in the *Clarion* the progress made by the drafting committee, but "Lancastrian in London" has a column and a half headed: "Answering the Call—Journalists rousing themselves in many parts." Those who argued that the trade union spirit was non-existent, he said, were discovering with surprise that the apathy of the average journalist was chiefly directed against the Institute of Journalists, and, once the "National Association was launched on a universal working basis," he believed hundreds would come into line. Many members of the Institute were decidedly favourable and when the new body had reached the "operating or effective stage" would secede. Although the new movement was not intended

to break up the Institute, he agreed that its operations might indirectly have that final result. Active support for the project was reported from centres in Yorkshire, Birmingham, Liverpool, South East London, and North West London, and even in Fleet Street there had been "some talk among individuals respecting the new venture, but although many are favourable, the bulk are apathetic, as usual." Berry "rubbed it in" rather severely: "Fleet Street is hopeless whenever any reform is projected, and it will have to be saved in spite of itself by the provinces. When the provinces combine and become an effectual force, Fleet Street will follow by degrees. Fleet Street must be educated up to the idea it is fond of preaching to others, that there is safety and security in numbers, and that men only begin to live when they think and act in conjunction." Even so Fleet Street was to welcome the Annual Delegate Meeting of the still new Union in April, 1909, and the *Journal* at that time to exclaim "London has capitulated." To the provinces went the honour of the start, but in later years London was to prove its mettle by gaining the first minimum wage concession in the country.

This survey of the original part played by the *Clarion* concludes with an extract from Rose's Trade Union Letter on November 23, 1906:—"There was another meeting of working journalists held in Manchester last Saturday (Nov. 17). Old pressmen say that it was about the biggest thing on record. There must have been nearly 70 men there from Manchester offices, as well as from surrounding towns. The recommendations already outlined were adopted with but trifling alterations and a larger and more representative committee appointed to give effect to the decisions. It will be a trade union in the best sense, but it will find a better way of maintaining conditions and of improving the status of its members than by going on strike, I hope. In the course of a few days the proposals will be printed and circulated, not only to the large Press centres, but to all the unattached journalists we can find. In several other districts the movement is proceeding, and a real live organisation will be the result." Here we may leave Rose rejoicing in a hope that was destined to speedy fulfilment, having himself rendered conspicuous service to a movement of which he had taken prompt and accurate measure.

The Manchester proposals were embodied in a circular designed as a national manifesto, calling on journalists everywhere to convene meetings and to co-operate with the prime movers in a general effort to get the suggested organisation into being. The spirit of

optimism which was to carry the Union forward on its difficult path pervaded this initial appeal, which expressed the belief that "our proposal will be firmly established within three months with a fair membership, and on a sound financial basis." In view of the historic importance of the document the full text of it is here reproduced:—

MANCHESTER,

December, 1906.

TO THE WORKING JOURNALISTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Gentlemen,

We have pleasure in submitting to you a statement of the facts and the reasons that have actuated us in promoting a movement for the formation of a new Association of Journalists.

The strong conviction that there should be established a new organisation capable of safeguarding and furthering the interests of working Journalists has led us to begin this movement.

On October 20th we convened a meeting of Journalists from Manchester and surrounding districts to consider the situation. The meeting was largely attended, and the following resolution was unanimously carried:—

"That having in view the unsatisfactory conditions prevalent in the Journalistic profession and the absence of any organization competent to deal with the difficulty, this meeting of Manchester Pressmen hereby declares in favour of the formation of an Association of Working Journalists."

A Committee was appointed to draft a preliminary scheme, and on November 17th the following report was unanimously adopted:—

Your Committee have met twice since their appointment, and have now to submit the following proposals as a basis for future work:

We suggest as a title, "The National Union of Journalists."

We have been guided in this, as in the rest of our recommendations, by a desire to outline a scheme rather than to set up any hard and fast rules and conditions.

MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATION. All Journalists (not newspaper proprietors, managers, or directors) who are and have been for three years regularly engaged in the profession, shall be eligible for membership.

In making this suggestion, we have kept in view the many complicated considerations that such a movement involves. Our main desire is to begin the new organization with none but bona-fide working Pressmen.

OBJECTS. (1) The defence of professional interests by taking action to remove definite grievances,

(a) With regard to salary.

(b) Conditions of employment.

(c) Tenure of office.

We have been careful to keep the professional interests of the members in a place of first importance. Such an object involves the full acceptance of trade-unionism in its best sense. We do not attempt to detail an aggressive, or even a defensive policy. It seems to us that not until the organization is permanently set up will it be prudent or even possible to define the precise methods by which the defence of professional interests can be accomplished. Much must depend upon the numerical and financial strength of the union as well as upon the conditions that experience will reveal. We have also borne in mind the propriety of giving a voice in the matter of policy to the journalists who have not had an opportunity of expressing their opinions.

(2) The establishment of out-of-work, benevolent and superannuation funds.

This suggestion we believe to be extremely important. We think that it is necessary to declare this as one of the definite objects of the new organization. The difficulties have been much magnified, but we believe that the liabilities of a Journalists' Union would be much smaller than in the case of an organization of artizans, who are subjected to the fluctuations of their industries. We would recommend, however, that the best expert advice be obtained before any scheme of financial benefit is adopted.

(3) To deal with questions affecting professional conduct and etiquette.

It will be impossible for any association of Journalists to gain respect or influence unless, in its operations, it takes cognisance of such offences as insobriety, improper conduct, and neglect of professional duty. This proposal is not made to propitiate the proprietors, but as an essential safeguard of the reputation and good name of the Union.

Finally, we suggest that the Journalists present shall form themselves into an association for the purpose of professional defence upon the lines indicated, and that such officers as you may appoint shall communicate with all British Journalistic Centres with a view to the formation of similar associations. We suggest that a National Conference be called as early as possible to give the Union a permanent status.

It will be seen that we have simply aimed at a general outline, and have not attempted to fill in the many details that we feel should be determined by the desires of the whole body. What we are most concerned with at present is the formation of local branches in order that we may enter into direct consultation with our fellow Pressmen throughout the country.

We ask you therefore to convene a meeting of your colleagues and fellow journalists for the purpose of co-operating with us in a general national movement.

For your further guidance we make the following supplementary suggestions.

(1) That, for the present, the representative committee shall act as the central advisory authority and corresponding centre.

(2) That until the Union is established on a permanent basis, all official services be rendered voluntarily and gratuitously.

(3) That each district shall render a return of the probable number of members, and also state the views of the district as to the amount of

subscription and the method of payment for the purposes named in the report to the Central Committee, not later than January 14th, 1907.

(4) As early as possible we propose to convene a national Conference to determine our constitution, policy, entrance fee, subscriptions, and rules. In this matter we desire to consult all districts as to time, locality and conditions.

(5) We request that branches formed in large newspaper centres will communicate with Journalists in outlying districts and enrol as many as possible.

(6) We particularly emphasise the necessity of strict adherence to the conditions of membership as embodied in the foregoing report.

We believe that the good sense and the fraternal spirit of our fellow pressmen will enable them to complete and substantiate the effort we are now making. The need for such an organization as we have outlined is sufficiently obvious to require no further argument than is supplied by your every-day experience.

From the response we have already received, we believe that our proposal will be firmly established within three months with a fair membership, and on a sound financial basis. For the rest we can only rely upon the energy and courage of British Journalists to develop the fullest and most useful possibilities of the " National Union of Journalists," and to make its activities worthy its name and its members.

TEMPORARY RULES.

We suggest the following temporary rules for branches :—

(1) The first meeting shall be convened at such time and place as may be locally convenient, and shall enrol members whose qualifications are in accordance with the conditions laid down.

(2) A Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected.

(3) The full name, the age, and the branch of employment of each member shall be recorded.

(4) After the first enrolment, each candidate for admission shall be proposed and seconded by two members who shall attest to his good character and professional standing.

(5) Each District Secretary to report progress as early as possible to the temporary centre, together with any suggestions and expressions of desire on the part of local members.

Local Secretaries who may be appointed are asked to send full particulars to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. N. Watts, Press Club, Manchester.

On behalf of the Committee,

Yours fraternally,

W. N. WATTS.

CHAPTER V.

FOUNDATIONS LAID: A HAPPY OMEN.

By mutual confidence and mutual aid,
Great deeds are done, and great discoveries made.
Pope's "Iliad."

THOSE with a disposition to discover omens in names will be set thinking by the title of the hostelry at which the Union formally came to birth—the Acorn Hotel, Birmingham. Truly it was an inspiring symbol for the great event. The official record of this "first national conference," as it was called, is contained in the Union's first minute book, which covers the period March 29, 1907—March 16, 1910. Compared with the massive books needed for the records of Union business nowadays, it is an unpretentious little quarto, but as it lies open before me at the time of writing I regard it proudly and wistfully as a shrine of the bright hopes and brave endeavours of our founders. The lives of many of them are now closed chapters, and the hand of the first secretary that penned these earliest records, long since sent its last folio to the printer. The pages seem like "the sound of a voice that is still." But let it speak in the story of our formation:

The first National Conference in connection with the National Union of Journalists was held at the Acorn Hotel, Birmingham, on Thursday, March 29, and Friday, March 30, 1907. The movement leading up to the Conference was initiated at Manchester, and a provisional committee selected from Manchester and a number of adjoining towns, had drafted provisional rules for the working of a union for journalists on trade union lines. These rules were adopted at a mass meeting of journalists held in Manchester. Prior to this communication had been opened with various newspaper centres in England and Wales, and provisional branches formed. It was the representatives of these branches who met at the first National Conference, which was called to consider the draft rules and to place the organisation on a permanent footing.

The following delegates were present:—

R. C. Spencer, J. F. Haylock, H. H. Howell (Manchester); Allison (Portsmouth), Violet (Chester), J. S. Raine (Blackburn), Evans and Hopkins (South Wales and Monmouthshire), Heighton (Central London), Wood (Ashton-under-Lyne), D. Berry (South East and East London), J. A. Walker (Birmingham), G. H. Lethem and Stuart (West Riding), C. F. Tuckett and Ainger (Sheffield), C. Rees (Liverpool), W. E. Perks (Plymouth), J. E. Brown (Croydon), Beddall (Rochdale), W. Small and Dixon (Wolverhampton), Wiggins (Leicester), Gordon (Knutsford), Rowbottom (Nottingham).

There were also present W. N. Watts (Manchester), who had acted as hon. secretary of the movement, J. C. Menzies (Manchester), who had discharged the duties of hon. treasurer and F. H. Rose (Manchester) who had advised the provisional committee on the drafting of rules.

Provisional branches at Hyde, Southampton and Winchester, North London and Tunbridge Wells were unable to be represented, and amendments to the provisional rules of which they had given notice, were moved on their behalf by W. N. Watts.

Spencer, who was elected chairman, gave an example of brevity in his opening speech. He said the formation of the Union must not be considered necessarily an act of antagonism to the employers, "nor should the existence of the Institute, in which the employers are banded, be considered as necessarily an association antagonistic to ours." On the contrary, if the Union succeeded in getting into its ranks the great majority of working journalists, it would be the means of bringing about a better understanding between the journalists and their employers, of putting the conditions of employment on a firmer and better footing, and of making things work much more amicably than they did then in some places. The three great essentials to make the new Union a success would be patience, perseverance and prudence. He warned them not to expect a revolution in prospects or a ladder straight to heaven. The first thing was a firm and sound financial footing, and fair out-of-employment benefit.

Watts, appointed conference secretary, reported that he had communicated with nearly every known centre of journalism in England and Wales; branches had been formed in quite a large number of places. A number of others, where branches had not been formed, were waiting to see how things shaped themselves at the Conference. But the results so far had exceeded their most sanguine expectations. About 1,000 journalists had expressed their intention of joining the Union.

The first financial statement was a little gem. Menzies had received in contributions and gifts from some of the tentative branches a sum of £17 10s. 6d., which had enabled the Committee to meet some of the expenses of formation. A sum of £12 6s. 5d. had been expended, leaving a balance in hand of £5 4s. 1d.

The Conference then settled down to its fundamental work of framing the rules, the basis of discussion being the draft submitted by the Provisional Committee. A large number of amendments were discussed and the meeting did well to dispose of these and adopt the rules by the end of the first day. The rules will be dealt with a little later.

There was a natural sense of drama, even among men whose work accustoms them to the dramatic scenes of life, at the opening of the second day's proceedings. The decisive moment is thus described in the simple minute :—

The Chairman moved a resolution bringing the Union into existence from this date, March 30, 1907, and asking the delegates to take steps on their return home to put into operation motions giving their respective branches official existence. This was seconded by Mr. Lethem (Leeds), supported by Messrs. Walker (Birmingham), Allison (Portsmouth), Watts (Manchester), Berry (South and South East London), and carried with acclamation.

Thereupon the delegates proceeded to tackle some questions true to type. They declared in favour of a labour bureau and the compilation of statistics of rates of pay in the various districts, asking the Executive to report to the next Conference. They asked the Executive to consider the advisability of enabling journalists not desiring to participate in unemployed and benevolent benefits to become members at a reduced contribution. They decided that inquiry be made into fixing a basis for a minimum wage. It was agreed that for the first year half the entrance fees received by branches should be remitted for the use of the Central Office.

The existing National Committee, with the hon. secretary and the hon. treasurer, were appointed to take steps to bring the rules into operation, and were instructed to co-opt representatives of the large newspaper centres not yet represented. Up till this time the provisional executive had been drawn from the Manchester district, the members being :—

R. C. Spencer, J. Menzies, C. Billyeald, H. M. Richardson, J. Chalmers, W. A. Balmforth, and W. N. Watts (Manchester), H. Moran (Rochdale), Phelps (Stockport), W. Bowker and H. G. Brooks (Bury), T. Robinson (Preston), R. Parker (Bolton), F. J. Stretton (Southport), Gordon (Knutsford), and a representative of North East Lancashire. W. Gedney (Blackburn), W. C. Hawthorn (Blackburn), and J. S. Raine (Blackburn), had acted in turn. The minute added :—"The Committee had had the assistance of Mr. F. H. Rose as a trade union expert." Finally the conference minutes state that the Executive Council were instructed to issue a pamphlet setting forth the objects of the Union.

There were many battles royal on the first day in the course of debate on the draft of rules submitted. Many of the branches,

then only provisionally existent, had taken close practical interest in the draft circulated to them by Manchester, and delegates reached the conference full of zeal and determination to carry the points of view of their groups. The amendments sent in much exceeded in bulk the text of the rules. Let us glance at some of the more important points involved. Although the title of the new body in Rule 1 was fixed as "National Union of Journalists," it was referred to elsewhere as "the Society." Manchester, faithful to its tradition, moved at every point the substitution of "union" for "society," and won. Croydon, representative of the timorous South, proposed as the title "The National Association of Journalists," but failed. Brown, their delegate, made the proposition, as instructed, but his friends related afterwards that no one was more pleased than he that no seconder was found. The guiding principle of excluding the proprietorial element from membership was firmly upheld. The provisional Rule 1 decreed that the Union "shall consist of working journalists (not newspaper proprietors, managers, or directors) who are and have been for three years members of a journalistic staff or who have been and are dependent upon their own journalistic work." West Riding drew attention to the question of the admission of editor-managers of small weekly papers; Rochdale wanted to add "managing editors" after "managers," Ashton-under-Lyne to insert "editors" after "proprietors"; and Preston proposed "that managing-editors be admitted as members, but debarred from attending meetings of the Union or taking any part in its affairs." All were defeated and the draft decree stood intact. Curiously enough, nine years later Lethem, the West Riding delegate, had to relinquish full membership when he became a managing editor in Glasgow.

The second clause of Rule 1 defining the objects of the Union was passed without change:—"The objects of the Union shall be to defend and promote the professional interests of its members (1) with regard to salary, conditions of employment, tenure of office; (2) the establishment of out-of-work, benevolent and superannuation funds; (3) to deal with questions affecting professional conduct." The construction of the clause is not above criticism, but South East and East London would have made it worse if they had carried their amendment to add a fourth object, namely "that no full member of this Union shall accept any berth for less than 30/- a week." This was indeed a headlong plunge, from other points of view, but the Conference wisely

held back. They also declined to adopt Central London's suggestion "That trade protection and sick benefit be substituted for unemployed benefit." The wisdom of our first legislators in thus defining the "title, constitution and objects" of the Union has been vindicated by all subsequent experience, for Rule 1 stands intact to-day in its essentials, though the development of the organisation has made some elaboration necessary, and the structure of the Rule has been perfected.

The status and powers of branches formed an issue of primary importance. The two leading groups in the provisional organisation, Manchester and the West Riding, differed on a main principle. Manchester put forward a draft prepared by F. H. Rose, which embodied the financial autonomy of each branch, on the model of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. The draft of Rule 2 (d)—it is still that number in the latest Rule book—provided that each branch should "have control of its own funds." West Riding challenged this by an amendment to substitute the word "administer" for "have control of." Lethem had been given the task of preparing rules and devising a workable financial system, by the West Riding. Assuming that in any society of journalists many of the branches would be small, he adopted the system known as "financial consolidation," which means the payment of all contributions, less a percentage for branch management, into a central fund on which all members would have an equal claim, thus placing members of large and small branches on a footing of equal security. In the Engineers' Society the branches mostly were large, and they kept their own benefit money, subject to a periodical payment into an equalisation fund. The rival systems were the subject of a lively debate, in which Rose and Lethem were the protagonists. In the end the White Rose triumphed over the Red, although Manchester had the support of other groups. The change effected in the provisional rules was so complete that outside the conference room Watts told Lethem that there was nothing left of the Manchester draft but the word "that"—an exaggeration, but not very far from the literal truth. Rule 2 (d) to-day reads: "All the funds shall be the property of the Union, but the money benefits specified in these rules shall be administered by the branches as provided in these rules and subject to the authority of the National Executive Council." It is a clearer statement than that of 1907 of what was the intention of the first conference.

Anticipating events a little it may be here recorded that Lethem, having been responsible for the consolidated finance plan, was obviously the man to be asked to put it into operation. He did so with the help of a friend who was Chief Secretary of the Friendly Society (the Rechabites) to which he belonged, and which conveniently had its headquarters in Salford. In the year 1907-8 the Union's books were prepared in that way and Lethem acted as unofficial adviser to Menzies, the hon. treasurer. During the following three years Lethem as President of the Union, and after that as hon. general treasurer for four years, elaborated the Union's financial system, and when he retired from office in 1916 the work of receiving contributions and paying benefits which he had been doing, was taken over by the Central Office. With every justification he regards the establishment of the consolidated system as a step of the greatest importance and as having contributed very considerably to the success of the Union's work. " Looking back on it," he now tells me, " it is one of the things, not very numerous in my life, which I can recall as having given effective service to my fellows. With the individualistic system put forward by Rose for the Manchester group, the Union could not have been successfully built up, for many of our branches are too small to give the law of averages room to work."

There were thirteen rules adopted by the 1907 Conference (our latest rule book has 23) and I have no room for the pursuit of much detail. One clause in the draft must have caused some fun. It provided that the chairman of a branch should be paid 1/- for each meeting at which he officiated and be fined 1/- for non-attendance " unless satisfactory reason is shown therefore." This piece of drastic discipline was deleted on the proposition of Wolverhampton, supported by Leicester and Tunbridge Wells. Rule 10 was headed in the draft " Lady journalists," and read: " Women who are qualified under Rule 1 may become members in all respects equal to men. They will be required to pay the same contribution and entrance fee and will be entitled to the same benefits, qualified to hold the same offices, and subject to the same rules and regulations." On the motion of North London and Manchester the heading was altered to " women journalists," and the phrase in the first sentence " in all respects equal to men " was cut out on the proposal of Manchester. There is no report of the discussion, so I do not know the reasons adduced. But there is no warrant for suspecting any anti-feminist motive; the phrase was redundant. The draft directed that a branch secretary

"shall be paid for his services" a small quarterly sum. This was changed to "may be," and there was an over-riding clause that all services during the first year should be voluntary. The entrance fee on admission to membership was fixed at 5/-. There is no entrance fee to-day, but the candidate has to send with his nomination form a sum equal to a member's contribution for one month, which is credited on election as payment of his first contribution. The contribution was fixed at 2/6 per four weeks. It is now 6/- per calendar month. In the matter of investments the draft stipulated that no money should be placed "in newspaper or publishing concerns," but this was rejected. Among the powers delegated to the Executive Council under the draft was that of taking the votes of members on the question of making grants to other trade unions "whose members are engaged in industrial conflict," but here again Manchester suffered a reverse and the proposed discretionary power was refused. Small, of Wolverhampton, informs me that the feeling of the Conference was not against the principle, but it was felt that the building up of the Union's funds was the first consideration.

It is impossible for one who was not present at the Acorn Conference to capture its atmosphere, or, as our modern sleuths might say, "reconstruct the crime." Although I had been one of the ardent and isolated spirits in many parts of the country who had been feeling his way to action, I was not privileged to attend the ceremony of foundation laying. We in the Woolwich branch sent David Berry as our delegate to the Acorn; next year we sent Walter Betts to speak for us at Leeds, and in 1909 I was the delegate to the first London A.D.M. Fortunately I have been able to secure the impressions of some who were present at Birmingham at that eventful Easter of 1907. B. Woodman, of Croydon, tells me that he was "almost a delegate." Speaking from memory he thinks branches were entitled to one delegate for each 25 provisionally enrolled members. Croydon had 48 and was thus entitled to one delegate only, and inevitably the chosen man was the one and only J. E. Brown. But Woodman was keen and "went on his own." So he was an eyewitness and I give some of his memories. Croydon had been busy to some effect before the first Conference, as proved by its substantial body of recruits. The original convener and first branch chairman was Alexander Somerton, of the *Croydon Advertiser;* R. S. Ponting was first secretary and Woodman first treasurer. Croydon, which was finally merged in the London (South

Western) branch, was zealous in spreading the Union and helped to form branches in Surrey, Sussex and Kent.

Spencer, in the chair at the Acorn Conference (writes Woodman), was introduced as chairman of the first meeting in Manchester. Watts was at his right hand, his papers and memoranda all in apple-pie order. No muddles or mistakes. He was in a very happy and hopeful mood. Spencer had the air of a man taking his job very seriously. He saw through in a day and a half an agenda which would have taken the average trade union gathering a week to chew. He was a hot shot on irrelevancies. In other words, time wasters had very short shrift. They were sniped out from the chair. He always had logic behind his rulings and everyone recognised that they were unbiased and just. An enthusiastic young delegate may have been " mown down " for being out of order and have shown signs of being nettled, but the " incidents " left no trail of rancour behind. There was the one common desire to lay well and truly the foundations of the N.U.J. The conference was begun, continued and ended, in a happy singleness of effort to produce the best possible organisation for the progressive benefit of the working journalists of the country. So serious-minded were the delegates that smoking was banned during the business sessions. Realising that it had an enormous debating area to cover, the Conference heroically decided that no speeches should exceed five minutes, and the chairman saw that the rule was not flouted.

Delegates sat at green baize-covered tables arranged in oblong fashion, minus one of the shorter sides. The room was of the comfortable and intimate kind dedicated so often to what once were called " smokers," but it was dimly lighted and got stuffy. There could have been no greater contrast than to step out into the brilliant spring sunshine in which Birmingham was bathed all that day. Roll-call of delegates was item No. 1 on the agenda, election of chairman No. 2, and election of Watts as general secretary No. 3. That, of course, was unanimous, and without any complimentary flourishes. Not that Watts was not regarded by everyone present with the warmest of admiration as the main spring of the movement. His reply was conspicuous for its modesty and moderation. This was characteristic of the conference. It flowed as a broad stream of calm and determined effort, without any stilted anticipations or boastful prophecies, or any under-rating of the tasks ahead. On the first rule as to membership, the positions of the comp-reporter, the linage man and free-lance, and the reporter " with a certain amount of commercial work," were discussed, and there was a long and tough debate over the qualifications. Editors having no proprietorial interest were regarded as eligible, but there were misgivings about editors who had supreme powers over staffs without holding any proprietorial interest. Watts declared that he had strong views about journalism for journalists, for including in membership only journalists who obtained their living from journalism, on the ground that for one case of hardship a dozen undesirables would be excluded from the Union.

The Chairman incidentally said they hoped for a long while to do without the necessity of giving strike pay. The Union could not be aggressive in its initial stages. It must begin at the bottom by tackling

low wages. An amendment which found only two votes led Spencer to remark, " If that were passed, it would go forth that 30s. a week is a sufficient salary for a journalist ! " A sidelight was thrown on the relations between journalists and proprietors in a certain area when J. E. Brown welcomed a resolution because it would enable a branch in one area to take members from another area " where they are afraid to start a Union branch for themselves." On the second morning—the conference had sat late the night before—Brown enlarged on the " gigantic failure " of the Institute. For the next place of meeting he suggested London, adding " but it will take a lot of working up." The high spot of the conference was reached when the Chairman moved " THAT THE NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS BE, AND IS HEREBY, BROUGHT INTO EXISTENCE." Once again he counselled the Union to act with prudence and not to rush into any violent means or method. G. H. Lethem seconded. " I hope and believe," he said, " that this will prove to be a gathering which in the annals of working journalists will be historic." Next to Watts and Spencer, Lethem was an outstanding figure in the Conference. Without more ado (it had not taken five minutes) the resolution was carried unanimously. " The youngster we have produced," said Watts, " is now the child of the country, and the country will have to support it. I don't believe any of you will regret the time and trouble you have taken in coming here to-day." Someone suggested that a group photograph of the delegates should be taken, but, for some reason or other, the idea was laughed out as quite a joke. Brown discovered that the Printers', Warehousemen's and Cutters' Union was in conference in the same city over Easter. Wanting to see the proper trade union spirit made manifest, he proposed a message of fraternal goodwill to the other Union, and it was forthwith assented to.

There is some little discrepancy in the stories about this last-mentioned incident. Richardson, in the first of his historical chapters in the *Journalist*, says he was told that Brown's message of greeting was sent to the Bricklayers' Union then in conference at another Birmingham hotel. " Many of our delegates nearly fainted, but the majority agreed. They evidently thought it was a symbolic act of laying the Union on a firm foundation." It seems a pity to expose the basis of such a happy metaphor as legendary.

A very helpful memorandum on the Acorn Conference has reached me from Small, of Wolverhampton. Affectionately known as " Billy," he was one of the first band of delegates and since then he has never been out of office. He convened a meeting of Wolverhampton and district men on Dec. 15, 1906, at which the Watts circular " to the working journalists of the United Kingdom " was welcomed and practical steps taken to support the Manchester movement. Small and H. A. Raybould (afterwards President of the Union) were appointed to represent

the branch at the Birmingham conference, but Raybould meanwhile moved to Coventry and Dixon became the second delegate.

'We journeyed hopefully that Good Friday morning in 1907 (writes Small), little dreaming, however, that the meeting was destined to play such a prominent part in the modern history of British journalism. Most of us were, at the outset, strangers to each other, but under the sympathetic and tactful guidance of R. C. Spencer, we soon settled down to real business. After detailing the many rule amendments in which the Wolverhampton delegates took a leading part, the notes conclude :—My general impression is that speeches in the main were short and to the point. The foundations were well and truly laid. Reflecting on the many achievements to the Union's credit since 1907 one feels a pardonable pride in having been privileged to be present at its beginning and to have taken even a small part in framing its constitution.

An interesting incident at the Acorn meeting, otherwise unrecorded, is revealed in Small's memorandum. He says it was reported that Mr. A. W. Still, a former President of the Institute of Journalists, then holding an appointment in India, had been communicated with and asked his opinion of the new movement. He sent a reply which is valuable as throwing light on contemporary opinion. Mr. Still wrote :—

I feel that, being so far outside the range of full information, I should not now intervene in the discussion of the matter, as an ex-president must keep a soft corner in his heart for the Institute, even when he doubts whether the course it is taking is the right one. Speaking with all reserve, because there may be points of which I am ignorant, I should say that the best policy now is for the greatest help and encouragement to be given to the new Union. It can profit by all the experience of the Institute, and will not be hampered by any of the conditions into which that corporate body has drifted. It provides the simplest and best way of testing whether there really does exist among working journalists the will to possess, and the power to manage, a purely defensive and provident body. If it prospers on the line marked out it will relieve the Institute of responsibility for the class of work in which it has hitherto given the least satisfaction to the mass of working journalists. But I hope the chartered body will continue to receive support, for it is, and must always remain, the means through which journalism can be upheld on a recognised professional basis. If I were at home I think I would advise warm support of the new Union and urge that the " trade union " functions should be left entirely in its care. Then I would press the Institute to stiffen its conditions of entrance, so as to make membership a conclusive evidence of professional qualification, and to continue its work as a body, safeguarding those interests of the profession which may be regarded as common to all classes of journalists, proprietors, managers, writers and reporters, especially in their relations with the public and with public bodies, or before the Law Courts. For these duties there can be no question that the chartered Institute possesses advantages over any other form of organisation.

This composite blessing and warning can have had little real influence with a body of men among whom were many thoroughly disillusioned about the Institute by bitter experience of its failure. In any event the die had been cast, and history shows how the Union has answered the test proposed by the writer.

CHAPTER VI.

PATHFINDERS AT WORK.

What was only a path is now made a highroad.—Martial.

ITS birth having been safely accomplished at Birmingham in 1907 the Union was now a recognisable entity, and the process of visible growth began. It is the purpose of this Chapter to note the early stages of the growth. The *Clarion* duly sounded a note of jubilation, and prophesied great things for the new Union. F. H. Rose wrote that perhaps the most striking and instructive feature of the Conference was the absolute consensus of opinion upon the main principle of the Union's constitution. "In complete opposition to the principle of the existing Institute of Journalists, the rigid exclusion of the proprietors of newspapers has been insisted upon. In the old association, which is in no sense a trade union, the proprietorial element has for many years been its dominant influence. In the new Union not only actual proprietors, but managers and directors are excluded also. Nothing in all the agitation which has led up to the new venture so surely indicates the spirit now existing among the working journalists of the country. The grotesque anomaly of a worker ventilating his grievance in a mixed meeting, presided over by his own employer, has become apparent and has engendered a determination to have no more of it."

Points in the rules noted by Rose included the covering of black and white artists, and of photographers in the term "journalists"; the admission of women with equal powers and privileges as men, on the basis of the same qualifications; and the fixing of the contribution at 32/6 per annum. This was not much, but the truth was that the Union had to cater for workers, whose earnings were much lower than was usually supposed. Indeed, Rose exclaimed, there was one proposal sent in to prohibit members accepting situations for less than 30/- a week! This may well have surprised a skilled engineer. Rose enlarged upon it:

The conditions of journalists upon small provincial papers are truly shocking. Instances have been cited of men working for the paltriest remuneration and being burdened with tasks that involve 80 and 90 hours' work a week. For years past the position of the working journalist has drifted into chaos. The hollow and pretentious Institute has let them drift and has concerned itself with the starch and kid glove departments, cultivating the good graces of employers by neglecting the interests of the men. Hence it is we find a large body of workers in a position of being unable to pay a high contribution. Most of the foundation members of the new Union are in comparatively good positions, and it says much for the fine spirit that prompts them in pioneering an association whose first work must be devoted to raising the conditions of their less fortunate and neglected brethren.

Discussing the adoption of centralisation in finance against his own system of branch autonomy, Rose admitted that " for a time at least," it would be more convenient than the " usual method," though it was a trifle more costly. The unemployed benefit at 20/- a week for 13 weeks (a terminable benefit receivable only during any period of twelve months) seemed high in relation to the contribution, but the determining factor was that in journalism there were no great fluctuations of trade, and a high percentage of unemployment was not probable such as occurred in other classes of workers. Rose thought the benevolent benefit, of which the Executive had the disbursement, would prove to be " the most popular and useful feature of the Union." He noted that the actual applications for admission already numbered over 1,000, which was " but a tithe of its possibilities." Taken literally this meant a future maximum of over 10,000 members. After 36 years the membership is not yet up to the 8,000 mark. But, in the flush of initial success, Rose was optimistic and congratulatory. " I see no reason to doubt that the National Union of Journalists will soon take rank as a first-rate trade union. I confidently predict that in three years it will stand with a membership of 4,000 at least, and a bank balance of £10,000." This rate of advance was not to be. Three years later—Good Friday, 1910—the Annual Delegate Meeting was held in Manchester, and Lethem in his presidential address declared: "To-day the N.U.J. has 54 branches, 1,692 members, and £2,053 reserve funds. . . This I claim is a record to be proud of." Cheers were raised, and also when Lethem quite legitimately flung up his cap: " Good Friday, 1907, will, I venture to prophesy, come to be regarded as a red-letter day in the history of the journalistic profession; and to have been a member of the Birmingham Conference, and taken part in launching the Union on its beneficent career, will,

I believe, 15 or 20 years hence, ensure to a man a place of honour wherever British journalists gather."

On April 8, 1907, the "sub-committee of the Executive Council" met at the office of the *Manchester Evening News*, with Spencer (chairman), Billyeald, Richardson, Menzies (treasurer) and Watts (secretary) present. The resolutions of the Acorn Conference were duly acted upon. Richardson was asked, and consented, to write the pamphlet setting forth the objects of the Union, which the Executive had been instructed to issue. In obedience to the instructions to co-opt representatives of the large newspaper centres not already represented on the Executive, the secretary had already at the behest of the chairman, invited the West Riding, Sheffield, Birmingham, Nottingham, Liverpool and South Wales and Monmouthshire branches to elect representatives. This piece of vigorous official initiative, when prompt action was of the highest importance, was approved. The choice of branches indicates the areas which at that stage were the strongest centres of Union interest—numerically strongest, it should be added, for determined pioneers were at work in smaller places far and wide. The Secretary was also asked to get the rules printed and take steps to secure the registration of the Union under the Trade Union Acts. On April 10, 1907, Watts issued a typewritten circular to branches "for the information mainly of branches which were not represented at the Birmingham Conference." It was a résumé of the proceedings, and stated that the Conference was of a highly satisfactory character, the proposal to establish a trade union being enthusiastically approved. It was noted that by a unanimous vote Manchester was selected as the headquarters; that the Committee were instructed to consider the advisability of establishing a Labour Bureau, and to obtain information as to the rates of pay in the various districts covered by the Union. The last sentence was a presage of a duty which the Executive has since had many times to impress unon branches. The circular ended with the hope "that branches will now get in working order as soon as possible." The address at the head of the circular, "Fern Lea, Glen Avenue, Boggart-Hole Clough, Manchester," was the source of many a joke among those ignorant of local toponymy. Although the rules were in print, and copies were sent with the circulars, it was four months before the registration was completed. The last page of the first little rule book reads:

"Copy of Certificate. Register No. 1388 T.U. It is hereby

certified that the National Union of Journalists has been registered under the Trade Union Acts, 1871 and 1876, this 15th day of August, 1907." On the other side of the page are the following names, apparently as the sponsors :—R. C. Spencer, W. N. Watts, Harry G. Brookes, J. A. Walker, H. M. Richardson, James C. Menzies, Jno. Chalmers.

My copy of the rules is one of the first batch sent out by Watts and was evidently my companion on missionary tours in Kent, in company with Betts. On the blank fourth page of the grey cover are written the headings of a propaganda speech delivered at a meeting we attended at Tunbridge Wells with the purpose of forming a Mid-Kent branch. If the digression may be allowed I will give these headings as showing what was in our minds in those formative days. Here they are as written :—" Real start of Union in Manchester. Disinterested character of pioneers. Not in avowed antagonism to any organisation. Newspaper Press Fund and similar bodies for charity. Institute had social, recreative and educative purposes. No strife with employers. Our Union for business purposes. Objects—read rules. These practical and business like. Need for elevation. Brain workers at price of scavengers. Thirty shilling minimum. Woolwich decided to form branch. Kent must follow. Call to scattered ranks of journalists. Union's rapid progress. A good cause and a strong case."

Reverting to Rose's comments on the benevolent grant, it is clear that that benefit was incorporated in the Union programme with a view to attracting the lower-paid men, for their own wider advantage, of course. The number of such grants given in the early days played a considerable part in making the Union popular. It was a justifiable propaganda bait, but the framers of the constitution never intended that what was described as the friendly society side of the Union's work should endanger its trade union side. It was recognised that the extent to which the benevolent outlay should be allowed to dip into the Union Funds must always be a matter for the Executive to decide. Although responsible for the finances for several years and always keen to see money reserves accumulating, Lethem favoured giving liberal grants when they were recommended by branches, on the dual ground that by so doing the Union gave help where it was needed, and at the same time gained a good advertisement for itself. The treasurer of those days was always the pioneer. Lethem confesses that it is very probable that if he were on the

Executive now his outlook might be very different, for the circumstances have altered. The problem of the balance of benevolent and trade union expenditure has continued down to the present. Quite recently the treasurer now in office (Tom Foster) has crossed swords with Manchester thereon.

Glancing again at the minute book we find the Executive Council meeting at the Fatted Calf Hotel, Manchester (these names have a curious significance) on April 15, 1907, when a friendly gesture was made to the South in an invitation to the Central London branch to elect a representative on the Council. On May 6, G. H. Lethem (Leeds) and W. A. Balmforth (Manchester) were appointed Trustees. A letter was read from Nenagh and Watts was asked to continue the correspondence with the object of furthering the cause of the Union in Ireland. Here is a minute with a significant implication: "The position of certain pressmen at Leicester was discussed and the secretary was instructed to suggest that these gentlemen should join a branch outside Leicester." Proofs of the proposed propaganda pamphlet were submitted. The opinion was expressed that the booklet "should not be too militant"; it was referred back to the sub-committee, with instructions not to issue it before again consulting the Executive. In the meantime a small leaflet was to be prepared showing the objects and benefits of the Union. Writing his history in 1925 Richardson stated that apparently his idea of propaganda was too fiery and after prolonged consideration the Executive turned his pamphlet down. Arrangements were made for Executive men to visit Ireland, Derby and Lincoln, and Hanley to promote organisation. On the suggestion of the Registrar General a third trustee was appointed, in the person of W. Gedney (Blackburn) at an Executive meeting on June 17.

About this time is mentioned the case of Griffiths, a Salford member, who had been refused payment of salary during illness "according to recognised custom." This was to prove the Union's first law case. It was not long before the famous Sheffield radius case came along. Both will be referred to in detail in the following chapter. Apparently the Executive were preparing for action, for on June 17 they decided to invite George E. Leach, of the Parliamentary reporting staff of the *Manchester Guardian*, to become honorary standing counsel to the Union. He duly accepted, filled the office with distinction, and rendered the Union valuable service until his death in 1920. In 1917 he lost an arm and was otherwise badly injured by a fall when attempting

to board a moving train. He made a remarkable recovery and in three months resumed his work on the *Guardian*. No better man could have been found than he to act as adviser to the young Union. Every case fought on his advice was won, for not only did he know the law, but he had a sort of instinct for jurisprudence which guided him into the right path. His knowledge of the ways of Westminster, too, was a great help in dealing with Ministers. He had skill and tact and the art of clear exposition. This was plainly shown, for example, by a lecture he gave at the Liverpool Press Club on the Law of Copyright and its application to journalism. In preparing and promoting legislation his work was invaluable. He was the author of the Local Authorities (Admission of Press to Meetings) Act, 1908; and he helped the Union to secure the insertion of provisions in the Children's Act, 1908. These gave reporters special status at meetings of local authorities, and in courts of justice. One other piece of work done by Leach worthy of special mention was his revision of the rules in 1919, by which he clarified their meaning for laymen and put them into full legal form.

As the Union was getting into its legal stride and had to consider various difficult problems, Messrs. Hockin, Raby and Beckton, a well known Manchester firm high in the regard of local journalists, accepted an invitation to act as the Union's honorary solicitors. London Central wanted to know if a man who was part proprietor of a yearly publication could be elected a member; Croydon asked for information which would justify a member taking action if discharged at short notice, and asked the Executive to consider the position of journalists under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906; Sheffield suggested the appointment of an honorary parliamentary agent to the Union. These were some of the subjects dealt with in the summer of 1907. The Executive rightly declined to give general rulings and promised consideration of each case on its merits. They told Sheffield that arrangements had already been made with several M.P.'s to deal in Parliament with any matters the Executive desired to have raised. By October arrangements had been made in several towns for the recognition of the card of membership by public officials. A number of branches expressed a desire for "something in the nature of an official organ," but South Wales and Monmouthshire asked for full particulars and estimates. One member envisaged a monthly journal "at a cost of about £2 per 1,000 copies." It was decided to prepare a scheme for the next Conference, to be held at Leeds.

Meanwhile a quarterly statement, private and confidential, was to be sent to branch secretaries.

At the October meeting Watts presented audited statements for the first six months. Entrance fees and subscriptions totalled £107 1s. 7½d., Manchester leading with £31 10s., and West Riding next, £26 14s. 7½d. Eighteen branches had sent money, the most considerable being: East Lancs. £9 0s. 4d., North Lancs. £3 2s. 6d., Sheffield £11 11s. 3d., Birmingham £4 9s. 2d., London Central £2 5s. 0d. The financial statement, which showed a balance of £4 4s. 0½d. cash in hand, was audited and found correct by Percy Rudd and H. M. Richardson. The membership returns showed a total of 773 in 22 branches, headed by Manchester 130, West Riding 114, South Wales 91. Other branches, having just been formed, had not yet sent returns. In January, 1908, the sub-committee received a letter from the Woolwich branch calling attention to the following advertisement which had just appeared in the *Daily News*:—"Reliable zealous junior (improver). Verbatim shorthand, news gatherer, cyclist. Football. Country district affording good experience. Salary 22/-. Age, reference and specimens. Box 1802 etc." The Secretary was instructed to write to the manager of the *Daily News* expressing regret and surprise that it was possible to secure the insertion of such an advertisement in that paper, as the remuneration offered was considerably below the amount paid to many street sweepers.

It was a sign of growth that the head office needed a book cupboard, a rubber stamp and a duplicator, which Watts was authorised to purchase. Evidently the pressure on Watts's energy and time had become much greater. Traces of haste are manifest in the minute book in the form of phrases repeated and little errors in tense and number. Towards the end of the Union year some of the Committee minutes are not signed in the usual form. This may have been due to the illness of the President before the 1908 Conference. Even with such a methodical man as G. H. Lethem as President the same omission is occasionally noticeable with sub-committee minutes in 1908. But a gallant little band of workers was struggling with a very big job, and "the king's business required haste." As the Leeds A.D.M. loomed in the distance the subjects calling for executive attention increased in importance and number. Was there just a little spice of satire in this entry by Watts? "A series of resolutions on a variety of subjects passed by the Portsmouth Branch referred to the sub-committee." Among the topics in the minutes are these:—

The Southern branches having started a register of vacancies, and the furnishing of information to applicants, it was decided to group the country into districts for registration purposes; superannuation scheme mooted, and Secretary instructed to get information; propaganda, a weekly advertisement of the Union to be inserted in *Daily News;* a number of press readers in Birmingham sought to join the Union (referred to A.D.M.); Sunday work, all branches informed that the whole question of a six-day working week was under discussion.

The Conference held at Leeds on Good Friday, April 17, 1908, was the first annual delegate meeting. When the Conference assembled at Birmingham at the preceding Easter the Union was not in existence and branches were only provisional, so it was not in fact a Union delegate meeting. Thus Leeds had the distinction of entertaining the first A.D.M., and it was well entitled to the honour as standing for the West Riding. While Manchester had the individual pre-eminence as a branch, the West Riding, including Leeds and Sheffield, surpassed it considerably in contributions to Union funds. The Executive, meeting in Manchester, paid the West Riding a graceful compliment in choosing Leeds for the first A.D.M. Of the Acorn Conference, 1907, there is no record except the minutes in the handwriting of the Secretary, which is the opening entry in the first minute book, but fortunately an official report of the Leeds gathering was printed, and this document in eight quarto pages furnishes me with much valuable material indicating the condition of the Union at the conclusion of a year's work. With an evening sitting the delegates finished the business in one day. On the previous evening the West Riding branch held a reception and a " smoker," at which a silver spirit tea-urn, suitably inscribed, was presented to Watts as a token of regard. Forty delegates signed the roll and prompt at nine o'clock next morning the President (R. C. Spencer) began the business, but not with an opening speech, for the day of presidential annual orations had not yet dawned. In the first annual report and accounts the Executive Committee recorded a year of steady development, though the work had necessarily been of a formative character. Here are some of the points:

When the active organisation of the working journalist was first undertaken not a few people who themselves depended on journalism warned us that we had entered upon a forlorn hope. Pressmen, it was said, while willing to preach to and aid others, would not themselves be persuaded to put into practice the best principles of trade unionism. Then, when

the Union began to grow, it was hinted that although journalists might act thus at the outset they would soon tire, so that, when the newness of the movement had worn off, our greatest asset would unhappily consist of members' arrears. Both these predictions have been entirely falsified. Not only have about 1,000 journalists in various parts of the United Kingdom identified themselves with the movement, but they are actively carrying out the plan on which the Union was conceived. The promptitude with which members pay their contributions demonstrates that, given an organisation which is prepared seriously to undertake measures that will conduce to the benefit of the journalistic worker, he will support it to the best of his ability. And when we consider how greatly journalists are by virtue of their calling distributed in small numbers throughout the country, this is no mean thing to have shown. The Executive desire to place on record their appreciation of the fine spirit which has animated the members as a whole in assisting the work of organisation. . . A notable feature of the year is to be recorded in the remarkable adhesion to the Union in large newspaper centres. It is a pleasant thing in journalistic life to be assured through this movement that many men who have little to gain by their membership of the Union have made common cause with their less fortunate brethren. The experience of the past year has shown the Executive that there is an ample field for the operations of the Union.

On the question of salaries the report struck a primitive note. "It will be recognised that, although it is impossible to set up anything like a regular standard, it ought not to be beyond the bounds of possibility to bring about an improvement as regards many men, particularly in some of the small towns where the conditions of employment ought to receive attention." As to the working week the case was quoted of a man who had not had a day's respite for four and a half consecutive months. In many cases Sunday labour was necessary, but in others it was not. Some branches had made representations to the proprietors on this question, with highly satisfactory results. The Executive, in aiming at a six-day working week, had regard to fair conditions of labour and not to the Sabbatarian standpoint. For the future, the report concluded, the motto must be "Organise ! Organise ! ! Organise ! ! ! " All members must become missionaries. The first big discussion was aroused by an Executive scheme for the division of the Union into districts and the payment of expenses of delegates to the annual meeting from a central fund. In deference to opinions from branches the Executive substituted a permissive scheme, giving the smaller branches power to form themselves into districts, the councils of which should submit by-laws, election of officers and financial schemes to the Executive, who should bring up the whole matter at the next Conference. This was adopted. It was decided that each branch be entitled

to send a delegate to the A.D.M.; a branch with over 25 members to have one additional delegate, and over 75 members two. Provision was made for the payment of delegates' railway fares and "out of pocket hotel expenses, not exceeding 7/6 per day." Expenses of additional delegates had to be met by the branches. What was apparently the first card vote was demanded by Manchester on the question of the size of the National Executive Council. The N.E.C. itself recommended that the number of members should be eight, plus the President, Vice-President, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary. An amendment that the total be 15, five to retire each year, was carried on a show of hands by 17 votes to 15, but the card vote showed 314 for the amendment and 439 against. The N.E.C. proposal was then agreed to. The biggest branch voting strengths in the division were :—Manchester 153, West Riding 103, South Wales 90, Sheffield 68, Birmingham 62, East Lancashire 42. A small committee at once proceeded to map out the country into eight territorial areas for the purpose of election of executive members. Nominations for the areas were taken separately. The appointments were as follow: Manchester district, H. M. Richardson (Manchester); rest of Lancashire outside Manchester, J. S. Raine (Blackburn); West Riding, W. Meakin (Leeds); Sheffield, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire, E. F. Hind (Chesterfield); Midlands, including Birmingham, Leicester, Wolverhampton and North Staffordshire, J. A. Walker (Birmingham); South Wales and Monmouthshire, J. Hopkins (Newport); London district, J. H. Harley; Southern district, W. E. Perks (Plymouth). The above list is given in the form in which it appears in a minute book wholly devoted to the "first A.D.M., Leeds, April 17, 1908." The contents agree in substance with the printed official report already mentioned, but the latter gives evidence of a little judicious sub-editing.

Proposals to admit press telegraphists and readers to the Union were withdrawn, and the status of reporter-canvassers was another matter left undecided. R. C. Spencer firmly declined to accept office as president for another year and proposed G. H. Lethem (West Riding). This was seconded by W. H. Armitt (Manchester) and carried. Warm compliments on his discharge of very onerous duties were paid to Watts on his acceptance of the secretaryship for another year. The N.E.C. were instructed to consider the question of issuing monthly or quarterly an official publication, "which must be self-supporting." On the motion of W. E.

Perks (Plymouth), seconded by J. Haslam (Manchester) the N.E.C. was asked to urge upon proprietors that journalists in their employ should have at least one day rest in seven. For the Woolwich branch W. Betts moved a recommendation that no member should offer his services as a reporter for less than 30/- per week, and an instruction to the N.E.C. to consider the question of a minimum wage and report to the next Conference. He cited cases of reporters receiving a wage less than was paid to scavengers. H. P. Chanter (Central London) seconded. The President said this was a matter on which they must proceed carefully, and several delegates feared that to fix anything like a minimum might have the effect of prejudicing those men who were in receipt of good salaries. Unanimity was reached on a declaration that many journalists were paid " a rate of wages which is so low as to be unfair," and a request to the N.E.C. to consider and report. A further resolution, which was to lead to one of the most onerous tasks ever committed to Union officials, instructed the N.E.C. to obtain from branches a census of journalists of all grades employed in their respective areas, with a return as to rates of pay, such returns to be issued to branches for the information of members. Among other matters remitted to the N.E.C. were such trifles as the question of a reporters' retention of copyright in his work; a paid secretary for the Union; the pay of official shorthand writers for work under the Criminal Appeal Act; and the establishment of a permanent Death Benefit Fund. On the initiative of Croydon and Central London the following was passed:—" That it is undesirable that convicted murderers and criminals should be employed as journalists by newspaper editors and managers, and that the Executive of the N.U.J. take the matter into consideration with a view to preventing an extension of the practice." Here was the germ of a policy to which in after years the Union was to give emphatic expression.

Picking up the threads of the first minute book let us note the interesting points in the remainder of the period covered, from May 9, 1908, to March, 1910. The survey is undertaken in some detail, to show how the work of the Union took shape when the pioneers were feeling their way in unexplored country, and dealing with problems that were novel in the sense of demanding corporate action upon conditions of which individuals had hitherto been helpless victims. Those who were first charged with executive direction had the responsibility of laying foundation principles. Immediately after the Leeds A.D.M. the N.E.C.

tackled the revision of the rules, and shared the work of studying pressing problems in this way:—Relations with the Northern Society of Journalists, President and Secretary; Free Lances, J. H. Harley; Sunday work, J. Hopkins and J. Smurthwaite, with a memorandum from H. M. Richardson from the point of view of a six-day working week; Minimum wage, W. Meakin; Criminals as Journalists and official shorthand writers' fees, President and Secretary; Reporters' Copyright, Standing Counsel and Secretary; Employment Information Bureau and An Official Publication, the sub-committee; Propaganda in their own areas, the whole Executive.

In reply to a question from Sheffield the N.E.C. ruled that a person who was a shareholder in a newspaper concern was eligible for membership of the Union "providing that he is a working journalist subject to the caprice of a newspaper manager or managers." The same branch complained of the want of publicity for the A.D.M., and inquiry was ordered into the reasons why the news agencies which were supplied with the official report did not send out the news. The penalty of success in litigation was a crop of requests by branches for action in their own areas, but the N.E.C. had to make it known that while ready to give advice, they could not undertake to give legal assistance except in cases where, in their opinion, a special principle was involved. The Croydon secretary wrote about expenses incurred in propaganda work and was told that his account must come through W. E. Perks, the executive member responsible for organisation in the South. Poor Perks at Plymouth! Apparently his jurisdiction extended from the Longships to the North Foreland. A nice little incident from the prestige point of view occurred at Wolverhampton. Replying to a Union complaint of the treatment of press representatives at the counting of the votes in a Parliamentary election the Mayor of that town sent a courteous letter stating that urgent recommendations would be sent to returning officers that regulations should be relaxed so as to afford the Press every facility for ingress to, and egress from, the building as often as their business required. Further, as to complaints of the action of the police, his Worship said that any inconvenience, annoyance or restraint which reporters might have suffered or endured was occasioned entirely from the police misinterpreting orders and allowing their zeal to outrun their discretion, for which the Chief Constable expressed regret. Truly an *amende honorable* in terms suited to civic dignity.

The autumn of 1908 brought an Institute "offensive" against its youthful rival. Leach, Richardson and Watts were charged with the production of a leaflet in reply to Institute criticisms on the Union's promotion of the Admission of the Press Bill. Then followed the memorable encounter between Watts and Mr. Arthur Walter, of the Institute, with Lethem intervening, on the question of the financial stability of the Union. This led to the decision to issue an official organ, the *Journal* of which Richardson undertook to act as editor, and the first number appeared in November, 1908. It was a much-needed line of communication between the Executive and the general body of members. The first mention of a member lapsed for arrears (but not unhappily the last) came about then from North London. The branch was told that it might use its discretion in accommodating the defaulter as to payment of arrears. The first benevolent grant, of £5 to a Croydon member, appears soon after, to be followed by many others ere long.

With a steadily growing membership re-arrangements of branch areas here and there were inevitable. The West Riding was authorised to split into three—Leeds, Bradford, and Huddersfield and Keighley, with a district council for the whole, while Halifax was allowed to part from Bradford and itself became a branch. In February, 1909, there is a resolution "that the question of the management of the Central London branch be referred to the President and Secretary, who were empowered to deal with the branch as they may find necessary under Rule 8. Further the President and Secretary be empowered to insist upon the election of a new secretary, inasmuch as the Committee has not been called together and the rule in regard to benevolent grants not observed." No further details of this unfortunate affair are given, and as the early records of the Central London branch long since perished in a fire at the old Press Club in Wine Office Court, where they were stored, it is not possible to elucidate it further. This was doubly a misfortune because it occurred just before the London A.D.M., but luckily it was unnecessary for the N.E.C. to use its disciplinary powers. Watts, who was once credited by a president with possessing a double quantity of soothing syrup, visited the Branch and was able to report that the organisation suggested by the N.E.C. was being carried out and that C. F. Tuckett, a former secretary of the Sheffield branch, was taking up the secretaryship. So all was well in time for the assembly of delegates in Fleet Street, and Tuckett appeared in that capacity for his branch.

At the end of 1908 the Union " was worth about £1,000." It must have needed courage to go to the Court of Appeal in the radius case on that margin of reserve ! Perks suggested an inquiry into a scheme of invalidity pensions, but there was " nothing doing." As " a partial recognition of his valuable services and sacrifice of leisure in promoting the cause of the Union," the N.E.C. recommended that an honorarium of 50 guineas be paid to the secretary. This the A. D. M. did with the greatest heartiness. The N.E.C. wrote to the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Winston Churchill) urging the claim of the Union to have a representative on the Copyright Commission. Complaints about the *Evening News* (London) and the Press Association seeking to get news supplied by non-journalists were referred to Central London. A letter from Philip Snowden, M.P., secured the decision that he was eligible for Union membership. When he spoke at the Coming-of-Age celebration in 1928 Snowden re-called that he joined the Union in 1909. " The reason why I was not a member earlier," he said, " was that I had the misfortune at that time to be a director of a small newspaper company and I was told that I was eligible for the Institute of Journalists, but not for a real trade union. However, when I resigned the directorship of the little newspaper my friend Watts told me that I was eligible to be a member of the Union, and I joined at once and have been a member ever since." It says much for the firmness of the administration at that time that no stretching of the rules was allowed even to secure the admission of so desirable a recruit as Snowden. Years later when he was the occupant of No. 11 Downing Street and I was treasurer of Central London, notes on the Chancellor's paper used to arrive punctually enclosing the Union contributions due. Well might a harassed treasurer, struggling with arrears problems of appalling magnitude, pray that Snowden's carefulness in discharging a primary duty should be an effective example to Fleet Street ! A curious personal issue was submitted by the Oxfordshire branch. " A gentleman who was eligible for membership of the Union but could not see his way clear to join " was willing to make a contribution to Union funds : resolved " That this gentleman, though eligible to join declines to do so, no contribution can be accepted from him. If, however, he desires to pay the entrance fee of some indigent journalist in Oxford anxious to join, that is a personal matter between the two, and the Executive have nothing to do with it."

J. E. Brown (the " Bishop " of that ilk) was added to the

Executive in April, 1909, and just after he submitted an elaborate memorandum, complete with forms, on the establishment of an Employment Intelligence Department. The scheme was adopted in substance and Meakin was appointed provisional hon. secretary of the new department. A subject which demanded more prolonged attention was the treatment of free lances. J. H. Harley presented a long report, in which he emphasised the difficulties: "The possible varieties of free lances are many, and by permutation and combination of these many varieties, you may reach an infinity of possible problems." An experienced Central London man told him that he knew dozens of men in Fleet Street whom he would not have in the Union at any price, and yet if he were asked to lay down a principle applicable to them all he could not very well do so. Harley divided free lances into three classes. of which the last was "a gentleman who may be described in the picturesque language of a letter which has reached me as 'one who was once a reporter, but who now only works when the right thing tumbles his way and when he has no beer into which to dip his beak.'" This type he at once dismissed from his calculations. Contributors of miscellaneous articles to monthly, weekly and daily papers were of vital importance to the Central London branch and G. K. Chesterton, "who joined the Union under the influence of the annual dinner" (on the occasion of the London A.D.M.) might be said to belong to it. The matter was not yet ripe for a decision. The Secretary of the Institute of Journalists (Mr. Herbert Cornish) asked for the co-operation of the Union on a question of shorthand-writers' fees, but the upshot of the correspondence was that "acting on the instructions of the President Watts intimated that negotiations must close in consequence of a declaration by Mr. Campion, the President of the Institute, at the annual conference of the Institute, that it was a degradation to attempt to draw members of the profession into a trade union."

The Education question was approached when a link was forged with the Manchester University Extension Committee. Then ministerial "poachers" attracted attention on protests from various places. Delegates to religious conferences were in the habit of reporting those gatherings for the secular press. It was decided to issue circulars to representatives of churches and others as a first step, and branches were advised to take action themselves where desirable. In the absence of any satisfactory reply the President of the Free Church Council (Dr. Jowett) was approached

and consideration was promised. This grievance against men of the cloth was to crop up frequently in after years. J. N. Back, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, an active member of the N.E.C. for some years, followed it up keenly, possibly because he was the son of a Wesleyan minister and had special knowledge of Conference affairs. Back did valuable organising work for the Union on the North East Coast, and died a victim of tuberculosis at Davos Platz in 1929.

Linage has always been a cause of dispute among staffs and we find Huddersfield asking the N.E.C. for a scheme to prevent injustice to subordinate reporters called upon to do such work by senior colleagues without receiving adequate remuneration. The Council thought it impossible at the time to draw up any scheme which would be suitable for universal application. They strongly condemned the practice referred to and suggested that branches should endeavour to make equitable arrangements between seniors and juniors, " the ideal being that the person who does the work should receive the full reward of his labour." Another practice of which many working journalists, including myself, have had to complain is the " milking " of copy by sub-editors and others for personal linage profit. A glaring example of this occurred when I, as a district reporter, sent in to head office a long story of a big steamship wreck of national, and even international, interest. My introductory column, giving the whole story, was wired to London by the linage man, and in some cases proofs were used as copy for the telegraphists with scarcely any alteration. This was rather a barefaced business, but it involved resolute action on my part before I extracted anything like adequate compensation for the use of a first-rate story which had meant much strenuous work to obtain. This kind of spoliation was not at all rare, (my instance dates years before the Union was formed), and in time a remedy was here and there found in office pooling systems which secured a fair apportionment of the gains. More serious than sporadic individual injustices, however, was the effect of linage earnings on our wages claims presented to provincial proprietors. Where linage was permitted, either tacitly or expressly, we had to contend for its severance from the questions of fair wage standards, but it was always available as a point in mitigation of lower rates of salary.

Much indignation was justifiably caused in these early days by the vacancy advertisements constantly appearing, offering wages round about 25/- per week and imposing degrading conditions of

service. One such has already been quoted. The North Staffordshire branch, approaching the advertisement question from another angle, submitted an ingenious scheme to the Executive. Some members wished to get better posts but were anxious that their aim should not become known to their employers —perhaps of the class of the bully previously mentioned, who once told his assembled staff that they might all quit, as he could get all the men he wanted "at thirty bob a week." The branch plan was this: "Could not an arrangement be made with the recognised media of advertisements of interest to pressmen—particularly the *Daily News*—by which if a pressman had a suspicion that the advertising firm was one he did not wish to know that he was on the lookout, he could enclose with his application a covering letter to the manager of the advertising department of the paper in which the advertisement appeared, stating in effect 'if the advertisers are such and such newspapers please do not forward my application.'" The Executive resolved that the secretary should write to the *Daily News* on the lines indicated above. In his reply the manager of that paper regretted that, "owing to a legal difficulty," he was unable to comply with the request. One step on the pathway of reform was the decision to advertise the Union's Employment Bureau in the *Newspaper Owner* and the *Daily News*.

The value of the system of benevolent grants having been proved, the Executive favoured a development of this side of the Union's work. They recommended the establishment of a Widow and Orphan Fund, and an allocation of £50 as a nucleus, with a request to branches to contribute. This led to an approach to the Newspaper Press Fund on the question of possible co-operation. The Fund was founded in 1864 "for the relief of necessitous members of the literary departments of the Press, who shall have become members of the Fund, and for widows and families of such persons throughout the United Kingdom." Another clause in its statement of objects is worthy of recording here: "Before its formation there was no such organisation in existence, and the Press presented this strange anomaly, that while it was constantly and successfully advocating the claims of institutions founded for the benefit of unfortunate members of other classes of society, there was no provision whatever for similar cases connected with its own body." The letter sent by Watts to the secretary of the Fund is a commentary on the poverty of journalists in the rank and file at that time:—

February 26, 1910.

I am instructed by the Executive Council of the National Union of Journalists to write you on a matter which we feel sure the Executive Council of the Press Fund will receive in the spirit in which we introduce it. Unfortunately we are faced with the fact that many of our members are not members of the Press Fund, this in the main being due to their lack of means. Since the formation of the Union in 1907 we have lost, I think, three members by death, and in one of these cases the man's family was left in impecunious circumstances. They had no claim on the Press Fund, but your Council, with the generosity that has always characterised them, made the widow a grant of, I believe, £10. At that time we had no legal power to assist the widow, as our rules refer only to members and do not include dependants. This case has caused the whole question to be raised and we propose at our Annual Delegate Meeting next month to get over the difficulty by establishing a Widow and Orphan Fund. We have no desire to inaugurate any scheme in opposition to the Press Fund, but we are confronted with the difficulty as to the lack of means of many of our members to which I have referred, and we feel we are compelled to do something for these men. It has occurred to us that your Council might be prepared to consider a proposal that they should accept from us a lump sum every year and give us the privilege of nominating, if necessary, cases for assistance, the number to be governed by the size of our contribution. . . I can only repeat that, being established primarily for other objects, we have no desire to intrench on the kind of work which the Press Fund is so peculiarly fitted to perform, and that our sole object in entertaining any proposal in regard to widows and orphans is the one I have mentioned. I have not the figures, but it is significant that all the principal officers of the Union and the majority of the Executive Council, which is thoroughly representative of the general body of members, belong to the Fund. The suggestion we make refers, of course, only to those members of the Union who do not happen to be members of the Fund.

The further minute on the matter merely says that the Council of the Press Fund regretted that they were unable to agree to the suggestion. The reason was revealed in the letter from the Fund as recorded in the ensuing annual report. It appeared that the Council of the Fund would have been most glad to have entertained the proposal had it been possible to do so under the Charter. The principle of the Fund was individual membership and therefore to adopt the Union scheme would be contrary to the constitution. The Council appreciated the friendly feeling shown by the Union towards the Fund and heartily reciprocated it. The only other outstanding minutes in the period now under review are the opening of the *York Herald* dispute in November, 1909, the collapse of the *Bristol Mercury*, and a warning to branches to exercise extreme care in admitting press photographers to membership.

CHAPTER VII.

LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE TRIUMPHS: THE "RADIUS" CASE.

It is the newspaper which gives to liberty its practical life, its constant observation, its perpetual vigilance, its unrelaxing activity. . . It informs legislation of public opinion, and it informs the people of the acts of legislation; thus keeping up that constant sympathy, that good understanding between people and legislators which conduces to the maintenance of order, and prevents the stern necessity of revolution.—Bulwer Lytton.

THE Union did not take long getting into fighting trim, and thus realising the hopes of the many all over the country who began to rally to its standard. The temper of the rank and file had been shown by the large percentage of the whole body of journalists who had formed themselves first into provisional branches, even before sufficient time had passed for an invitation to be received from the Manchester pioneers, and then converted themselves into properly constituted branches immediately the Union came into formal existence at Easter, 1907. The executive had every moral encouragement to energetic action; but caution had to be exercised until financial resources had had time to grow.

By general consent 1907-8 was regarded as a formative period, but in the first few months a call came which could not be refused. This led to the first law case, involving the journalist's right to wages during illness—an issue on which it was rightly felt a test case should be brought. Ernest Griffiths, of Salford, was the reporter concerned and his employers were Thomas Chadwick and Sons, printers, Manchester, proprietors of the *Salford Times.* The matter came before the sub-committee on July 1, 1907, and the minute states that although Griffiths was prepared to run the risk of being discharged if the committee thought he had a good case to fight, "the feeling was that, seeing that at present they could do nothing for Griffiths if he came out of work, it was not advisable to take action in view of the fact that there was some uncertainty as to the law." A "whip round" of the Manchester branch to recoup Griffiths for his loss was suggested, but also it was decided to get legal advice. Then Leach (hon. standing counsel to the Union) advised that legal action should be taken.

Griffiths made formal application to the proprietors for sick pay and wages in lieu of notice. He had been ordered to leave the office for some alleged neglect of duty, and payment of wages (25/- a week !) for the absence of eight weeks, due to an attack of typhoid fever, was refused. The case was heard at Manchester County Court by his Honour Judge Parry, who upheld the contention of the Union's counsel that both by law and custom Griffiths was entitled to payment during illness and to a month's notice, instead of the fortnight given. The defendants admitted their liability as to notice and paid the sum due into Court. As to the sick pay the defendants said that Griffiths on returning to work agreed to forego payment while ill. The Judge saw nothing in this point and said the plaintiff's legal rights remained. There was judgment for the full amount of the plaintiff's claim with costs. Thus the first of a long series of legal successes for the Union was registered. By February, 1908, when a modest little pamphlet on " the aims and advantages " of the Union was issued, credit was fairly taken in this fashion : " Legal machinery has been got to work, and a few weeks ago journalists generally learned with satisfaction that their interests are being fought for, and custom established in their favour by decisions in the public courts. Already the Union has shown that it exists for the purpose of strenuously asserting the rights of a profession whose champions in the past have been mostly those who have had a lively sense of favours to come."

A valuable piece of legislative work must next be included in these early achievements, namely the Local Authorities (Admission of the Press to Meetings) Act, 1908. In January of that year the Court of Appeal, in the case of the Tenby Corporation v. Mason, laid it down, unanimously and without qualification, that a Town Council had an absolute right to refuse admission to representatives of the Press, or to any particular representative of the Press, whenever it cared to do so. The Executive of the Union had watched the Tenby case closely, and anticipating the judgment on appeal, was already preparing, when the decision was announced, the draft of a Bill to give the Press a statutory right of admission to the meetings of all local authorities. That Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on February 13, and in spite of opposition, passed into law on December 21. Briefly, the Act provided that " representatives of the press shall be admitted to the meetings of every local authority," subject to the right of the authority temporarily to exclude them when, in

the opinion of the majority of the members of the authority present, expressed by resolution, such exclusion, in view of the special nature of the business dealt with, was advisable in the public interest. The "authorities" were defined to include the whole range of local bodies, from the county council to the parish meeting, a number of joint bodies, many of which had not admitted the Press before, education committees, boards of guardians, distress committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, Water Boards, and any other local body having the power to make a rate. The Act defined "representatives of the press" as duly accredited representatives of newspapers and of news agencies which systematically carry on the business of selling and supplying reports and information to newspapers. The Act gave the reporter for the first time a definite legal status. Various amendments had been wisely accepted to ensure the safety of the main principles of the measure. For instance it was first proposed that a two-thirds' majority should be necessary for an exclusion resolution, but this was altered to a bare majority.

Unhappily this measure proved to be one of the first causes of contention between the Institute and the N.U.J. The issue was deemed to be important enough for the publication of a large four-page circular signed by Watts on behalf of the Union Executive, and dated August, 1908. It was a complete and carefully balanced survey of the whole question. First there was a reiteration of the objects of the Union promoters: "The N.U.J. was formed by a number of working journalists who, having come to the conclusion that there was in existence no national body sufficiently watchful of their interests, and feeling that the lack of such was fraught with danger to their well-being, decided to unite for the purpose of protecting themselves, and fostering a spirit of unity. They had no desire to destroy or damage the Institute of Journalists, which many of them recognised as a valuable medium for social intercourse, but they saw clearly that the repeated attempts to make the Institute something more closely connected with the daily needs of journalists having failed, there was no alternative than to found a new and a more democratic body. The Institute took the mere formation of the Union as a challenge to justify its existence . . . but unfortunately its increased activity has been directed not to improving the status of the working journalist but to endeavouring to obstruct and belittle the work of the National Union. The main line of attack upon the Union's work so far has been in connection with the Local

Authorities (Admission of the Press) Bill." It was then pointed out that the Institute, following the Tenby judgment, had planned a Bill to provide that no resolution of a local authority to exclude Press representatives from its meetings, should be valid unless sanctioned by the Local Government Board in pursuance of by-laws which that Board was empowered to frame regulating the admission of the Press to such meetings. Regarding this as an undesirable procedure the Union Executive decided to adhere to the bolder and more practical course of a direct enactment, which fortunately was embodied in the Act without change. In Standing Committee the Institute tried to get the Bill amended. One design, wrote Watts, was to strengthen the Institute at the expense of others. "The Union was to be ignored altogether, and the Institute was to figure in a statute as the only recognised body of journalists. In other words the Union was asked to turn its own Bill into a lever for forcing journalists into the Institute! And when the promoters politely refuse to entertain this bland proposal they are tearfully reproached for their indifference to the interests of working journalists!" Looking back to this old controversy it is plain that the Union had much the best of the argument on the main provision of the Act, with its clear-cut democratic declaration, as against the Institute's piece of conventional bureaucracy. Leach, speaking at the 1908 A.D.M., said that the action of the Institute in bringing forward amendments had been most unfriendly, but the Union had this satisfaction, however, that not one of those amendments had been accepted.

A tribute from a source independent of both bodies, the *Newspaper Owner*, acknowledged that the N.U.J. had "rendered a great service both to the press and the public by their very successful Bill." The extraordinary nature of the achievement was that this was one of the only two private members' bills which had so far passed the third reading out of the hundred or more introduced during the Session. The success was partly due "to the very able way in which its chances have been furthered both in the House and the Lobby. Mr. George E. Leach, standing counsel to the Union and the chairman of the Press Gallery Committee, drafted a short, simple and workable measure. . . and it is no small compliment to Mr. Leach's draughtsmanship that the House adopted the Bill practically in the form in which it was introduced. Mr. Leach himself has shown a parent's interest in the measure and he was able to enlist the sympathies of many powerful friends both on the floor and in the Lobby." The help

of Gilbert Watson, of the *Yorkshire Post*, secretary of the Gallery Committee, was acknowledged. The Labour Party had adopted the Bill and the Union recorded its indebtedness for invaluable assistance to Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Lord Donoughmore and Lord Faber. The Union's enterprise in Parliament was also seen in the Children's Act, 1908. As first drafted that measure would have enabled magistrates to exclude the Press from the new juvenile courts which were then established. Acting promptly the Union got the provision inserted that "*bona fide* representatives of a newspaper or news agency shall not be excluded" from a juvenile court. Thus Union action succeeded in these two acts in winning a special status for reporters.

Among the Union's first exploits the most resounding was undoubtedly that widely known as the "Sheffield Radius Case." The very earliest piece of propaganda literature issued by the Executive that I have traced was a dignified brochure entitled "National Union of Journalists; its purposes explained, together with reasons why all journalists should join." It reads almost like the front page of a coranto of 1620. It comprised 16 pages, its size, to be exact, was demy 16mo., and it was dated 1907. In it "radius agreements" were cited as an instance of the real grievances with which the Union proposed to deal:

> One such agreement has come before the Union. It is such an instrument as makes the not unknown quotation about the "liberty of an enlightened press" keenly ironical to those who sometimes pen it. This agreement provides that the reporter-canvasser-general business agent shall be subject to a moment's notice if he "absent himself without leave," or "commit or omit any act whereby the employer *may be threatened* with legal proceedings. All linage shall be the employer's; no shorthand note may be taken except in the name of the firm and the reporter (the man who does all the work) shall have one half the proceeds." The wage is thirty shillings a week, "payable only during such time as he shall actually perform his duties." No sick pay here. There is ten per cent. commission upon the "net" value of all orders actually sent in by the reporter for new advertisements, but the employer is to be "the sole judge as to whether any fresh order from a recent advertiser is to be treated as a renewal order or a new advertisement." There are many more limiting clauses to this amiable document, and finally it signs away the servant's right to enter the service of any other newspaper proprietor within the same county, or other towns in adjoining counties, for twelve months after he has left employment under this extremely generous firm.

This was no doubt a vicious example of an evil that marked the sweated journalism of that day; but there were other less offensive agreements which nevertheless contained the objectionable clause precluding employment with other papers within a prescribed

radius. The famous case now to be recorded came before the Executive in the following letter from the Sheffield branch :—

N.U.J., Sheffield, April 25, 1908.

At a full meeting of the committee of the Sheffield Branch of the N.U.J. it was resolved that the Executive be urgently requested to instruct the Standing Counsel to hold a watching brief for the Union in the case of Sir William Leng & Co. (*Sheffield Telegraph*) v. Andrews in the High Court of Justice on April 28, in the interests of the defendant as a member of the Union, and a number of other members of the Sheffield branch whose interests are closely affected by radius agreements of a character similar to that involved in the action. The Committee hold that it is desirable that a test case should once and for all decide the validity of agreements which are opposed to every principle of equity, commercial morality and individual liberty; and further empowers Mr. Andrews to lay the facts personally before the Executive of the Union with a view to taking immediate action as suggested.

The legal battle that ensued, in which the Union gained a striking victory, is of such importance and permanent interest, that the facts must here be set forth. They were narrated in a three page article in the Union *Journal* of February, 1909, with such care and precision that the writer must, I believe, have been Standing Counsel. William Linton Andrews, a member of the Union, at the age of 19, joined the staff of the *Sheffield Telegraph* as a junior reporter at a salary of £2 a week, subsequently increased. Three weeks later he signed the usual agreement which members of the staff were required to sign. The radius clause in it read: "The employee shall not after he shall leave the employment of the said company either on his own account or in co-partnership with any other person or persons be connected as proprietor, employee, or otherwise, with any newspaper business carried on in Sheffield or within a radius of 20 miles from the Town Hall thereof." The clause, had it been valid, would have bound Andrews for life. There was a conflict of evidence as whether he was fully informed of the nature of the radius clause when he agreed to join the staff, but Mr. Justice Eve found that he was. Nothing turned on this point, however, in the Court of Appeal.

Andrews left the *Telegraph* of his own accord and six months afterwards accepted an appointment on the *Sheffield Independent*. On hearing of his intention Messrs. Leng reminded him of the "barring clause" and offered him his old position on the *Telegraph*. Andrews, however, began work on the *Independent*, and Messrs. Leng issued a writ for an injunction to restrain him from acting in breach of his agreement. In May Mr. Justice Joyce refused an interim injunction, having considerable doubt

of customers, who saw the books and knew the secrets of the trade. As to sources of exclusive information he did not know what that meant, except that the paper might have representatives in different parts of their district who furnished them with local news, but that was not really the sort of confidential information an employee could not legally and properly disclose. He could not find that the learned Judge had really found any facts which justified the conclusion that this clause was reasonably necessary for the protection of the plaintiffs' interests. Lord Justice Fletcher Moulton said: "Taking the totality of the restriction, I have no doubt that it is too wide, that it is wider than is necessary for the protection of the plaintiffs' business, and therefore it is void, as being against public policy. That being so it is not necessary to enter into the question of infancy." Lord Justice Farwell dealt with the suggestion that the plaintiffs were entitled to the protection of the clause because the defendant had a knowledge of the "organisation" of the office. The evidence was singularly scanty in details as to the meaning of "organisation." He rejected the idea that such knowledge could be used to constitute a breach of confidence. It would be such a breach to reveal trade secrets of things which a man was not intended to learn, but here it was a case of a man simply improving his own knowledge of the trade. Finally Lord Justice Farwell emphasised the value of free competition between newspapers from the point of view of the general public, saying:—

> There is this further, that this clause is entirely contrary to the interests of the general public, if it be to their interest to be supplied with various newspapers from Sheffield, or places within a 20 miles radius. Assuming that to be so, this particular paper desires to retain the entire radius of 20 miles. That may, or may not, be good for the Sheffield paper, but whether it is good for people craving for news who live round about is a different matter. This condition is, in my opinion, utterly bad throughout, there being no reason given for the protection suggested to be required for the whole duration of the defendant's life, and I think that makes it on the face of it utterly unreasonable.

These judgments were printed verbatim in all the Law Reports as important contributions to the law of restraint of trade, and the lawyers regarded it as a "leading case." It should be noted that the Union acted impartially in the many cases brought to its notice; where a member for his own interest sought to break the binding nature of custom he would be refused legal aid. But Standing Counsel's advice was that the Union might well contest the validity of every restrictive agreement brought to its notice,

and, what was equally important, prevent the growth of pernicious customs.

The central figure in the Sheffield radius case, W. L. Andrews, has furnished me with a retrospect which, while recording the case itself, gives impressions of working conditions in journalism at the time. After the Armistice of 1918 he turned up in Fleet Street in Black Watch kilt, and for a time was in the sub-editorial department of the *Daily Mail*. I often met him among the band who in the early hours took the train at St. Paul's for their South London homes. Later he edited the *Leeds Mercury* and in 1939 he succeeded Mr. Arthur Mann as editor of the *Yorkshire Post* when that paper and the *Leeds Mercury* merged. His voice has become familiar in the North Regional programmes of the B.B.C. and recently he made an excellent *début* on the " Brains Trust." He is today chairman of the Editors' Committee of the Newspaper Society, and is justly proud of being the first official chairman of the provincial editors. This body promises to become useful and influential.

Extracts from his recollections are appended :

The radius case began, for me, on the island platform at Huddersfield Railway Station in May or June of 1905. I was then, at the age of nineteen, a restless and dissatisfied reporter on the *Huddersfield Daily Chronicle* at a salary of 27/6 a week. This was not my first reporting job. At the age of sixteen, fresh from school, I had had a few months on the *Eastern Morning News* and *Hull Daily News* at 7/6, and later 10/- a week, and now I was sorry I had left the vigorous journalism of a great port for a newspaper backwater. The *Huddersfield Daily Chronicle* was one of the curiosities of journalism—a four page paper with a circulation, except on Saturday, of only a few scores of copies, printed on a flat bed press. The Saturday issue gave the week's news and had a good amount of advertising. The daily issue had about a column of general home news from the Press Association, but no foreign news. What we did print was local news in cold-blooded detail, especially Conservative speeches. I liked writing special articles, but the *Chronicle* did not want them, and I used to send them to the London *Globe* and the *Echo*, the *Manchester Evening Chronicle* and *Sheffield Telegraph*. I had a fair number accepted, especially on sea life ; that kind of free-lancing was easier then. The *Chronicle* made fullest use of my shorthand. On a Saturday I often attended a Conservative Club to hear a speech by the prospective candidate, Mr. (afterwards Sir) John Foster Fraser. I used to take down every word and write it all out, some five or six columns, throughout Sunday. On quieter days I tramped the Colne Valley in search of paragraphs. Fleet Street seemed to me then as fascinating and as remote as the wonders of the Golden East. After continually replying in vain to Press advertisements in the London *Daily News* I was in a mood of frustrated ambition when a letter from Mr. C. H. Chandler, Chief

Reporter of the *Sheffield Telegraph*, lifted up my heart. He asked whether it would be convenient for me to see him during a visit he was to pay to Huddersfield. If so, would I look out for him on the island platform at Huddersfield at a certain time ? I should know him by his carrying a copy of the *Sheffield Telegraph*. I kept the appointment and approached eagerly a trim little Kiplingesque figure with a fierce moustache, large spectacles, darting eyes, and he fired off the usual questions about shorthand, experience, pay and references. It was arranged that if he was satisfied with further inquiries I was to have £2 a week and to go to Sheffield as quickly as possible to help to report a forthcoming Royal visit. My heart sang as I left him. He impressed me as a journalist of superb quality, a Harmsworth, a Hearst, or a Gordon Bennett. I felt I should be lucky indeed to have a chance of working under him.

Later Chandler said he explained to me at that meeting the radius condition which would be part of my agreement, but I feel sure that his memory played him false. He didn't mention it on that occasion, nor did he mention it in a letter which I received a few days later, when he formally offered me the post of junior reporter at £2 a week. This omission did not seem to be important to Counsel and the Bench when the Radius Case was heard three years later, but to me it was of deep importance on an issue of conscience. To the best of my recollection I never heard of the Radius Agreement until after I had gone to Sheffield to help to report the Royal visit and had settled down on the staff. Chandler then asked me to sign the agreement as a matter of form, and, calling attention to the radius clause, said it was of no practical importance and would never be insisted upon. This to me was the unfairness of the case, that I never saw or heard about that clause until weeks after I had left my old job and could not go back to it. I had to sign or face being out of work. I say the agreement made with me was the one explained on the island platform and concluded by an exchange of letters which did not mention any radius clause. It seemed odd to my youthful mind that this was not made a strong point at the hearing of the case. But the Union's objection to the agreement was that it made me surrender something of vital value (the right to transfer from one Sheffield newspaper office to another) for no consideration whatever in return.

I remained on the *Sheffield Telegraph* till 1907, when I had saved up enough money, mainly by writing special articles for London and Manchester papers, to launch myself on a venture that appeals to so many young journalists. I wanted to become a foreign correspondent. My plan was to go to Paris for some months, and then, with better French, go to Canada, try my hand there, and work my way into the United States newspapers. It may seem now to have been a bold plan for a youth of modest attainments, but at least I had the habit of industry. All might have gone well if an economic blizzard had not struck North America. While I was pondering the future I was offered a job on the *Sheffield Independent* with the prospect of an attractive post on a new evening paper (the *Evening Mail*), which that office was about to bring out. I had a rosy vision of leader-writing, special writing, descriptive work, and the rest of it. So in due course I went to the *Independent* office, and was presently amazed to receive a letter from the *Sheffield Telegraph*

saying that I had bound myself to refrain from ever working for the *Independent*. A threat was uttered, then or later, to use the force of the law to restrain me from continuing in the service of the *Independent*. This was a dispiriting blow. I had the utmost sympathy from almost all my colleagues. They said I must formally report the circumstances to the National Union of Journalists. This had come into existence not long before, and we had at Sheffield one of its most eager branches. The first member enrolled was Richard Ainger, a kindly and spirited man about town, who was chief reporter of the *Independent*. He became the first chairman of the Branch and held office for three years. Cyril Tuckett (killed in the war of 1914-18), a sturdy Devonian, was an enthusiastic member and at one time branch secretary. Other foundation or early members I recall were debonair, cigar-smoking L. A. Northend, who looked like an amateur Parisian and went later to *The Times*; J. B. Heather, Cyril Clague, Watson Parton, R. R. Whittaker, later editor of the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, Mary Abbott, afterwards of the *Westminster Gazette*, David Cope; A. J. Cummings, a brilliant reporter and inspiring colleague, who afterwards became a leader-writer on the *Yorkshire Post* and is now political editor of the *News Chronicle*; Ariel Wright, afterwards of the London *Evening News*, and John Oakley, afterwards editor of the *Sheffield Telegraph*.

Among our earliest visitors—they may, indeed, have come before the branch was actually formed—were R. C. Spencer, chief reporter to the *Manchester Guardian*, W. N. Watts, *Manchester Evening News*, Harry Lane, afterwards editor of the *Daily Sketch* and for some years editor-in-chief of Northcliffe Newspapers, and George Lethem, then on the *Leeds Mercury*, and now at the age of well over 70, a most useful member of my war-time sub-editing staff. All of us in the Sheffield Branch, and I should think all in the profession, were actuated by the ardent conviction that many journalists were needlessly ill-paid and over-worked. We were longing to get into action against bad employers.

When the threat to my livelihood was reported to local Union members some thought at once this was a chance for bold action by the Union. They held that we could hardly ever get a more iniquitous demand by employers. One colleague said to me, "Stick to your guns, my lad, and you'll become famous." But I hesitated. I hated the thought that I might become known as a man who had broken an agreement. To me it was clear that the other side were the agreement-breakers, but would this be the general view? My father (William Andrews, of Hull), an upright man with a lifetime of literary experience, was gravely disturbed by the thought of my appearing in the courts. He was all for fighting, if one had to fight, for freedom, but was it of supreme importance that I should work for the *Sheffield Independent*, or rather the *Sheffield Evening Mail* when my ambitions were so widespread? I talked it over with my colleagues and soon found my intention was clear. If they were willing for the sake of the Union and the profession it represented to give me their determined help, I too must not fail the Union and my fellow workers in journalism. Rightly or wrongly, however little I cared for fighting, I felt that I must fight, and as a contribution arranged that whatever expenses I incurred in attending the proceedings in London

should be my own responsibility. One or two of my colleagues suggested that I should pay the Union a lump sum, but I felt that I was fighting for a principle and not for direct personal profit and this was the general view of my Sheffield fellow-members. I have always regretted that the fight was not against bad employers but against a firm for which I had a warm admiration. I was, indeed, puzzled at so much ado about a junior reporter. Why should the *Sheffield Telegraph*, a great and powerful paper, fear the abandonment of an agreement which it was so plainly a mistake to impose? Who wanted that radius clause? It was, I believe, Colonel (afterwards Sir) Charles Clifford, a man of the highest integrity, a fine soldier, and a generous employer, but a man of stubborn whims. I do not think that his fellow-director, Mr. C. D. Leng, cared very much about the Radius Clause one way or the other, and I know that the editor, Mr. Parkin, disliked it. But I suppose that Colonel Clifford was in a fighting spirit and would be content with nothing but victory—a spirit which had helped him greatly to build up the paper. Later I was asked by one of our solicitors in London to tell him whom the case was really aimed at. Who was the big fish the *Telegraph* wanted to snatch from the *Independent* net? When I said I knew of none the solicitor said testily, "Come, come! You don't think it's *you* they are worried about?" No, it was not: it was a matter of pride and prejudice, not a question of practical importance.

During the hearing of the case it was brought out that when I had an illness Colonel Clifford sent me champagne and oysters. I was represented as a poor, ungrateful creature. But indeed I was not. I had made many mistakes and learnt a great deal on the *Sheffield Telegraph*. The influential Col. Clifford and the ruthlessly efficient Charles H. Chandler were types I had never known before. I learnt a great deal from their kinds of technical skill. But both the paper and the Union were soon in fighting mood, and I felt that if I were to draw back it would be cowardice. Above everything I was touched by the loyalty of fellow journalists all over the country, and expecially by the fatherly encouragement I had from W. N. Watts, whom I went to see at his home in Manchester one Sunday. Another great-hearted journalist with whom I came in touch was George Leach, of the *Manchester Guardian* who, as a barrister, gave valuable advice—I believe, indeed, that his advice to the Union was always right.

The Union at this time was too young to be well off for funds and an arrangement was made by which the *Sheffield Independent* was to pay half the costs. This was a friendly thing to do. It was probably due to the influence of Mr. John Derry, the editor, and Mr. J. B. Hobman, the leader-writer. Both had a great sense of justice, and wanted to score over the *Telegraph*. I cannot now remember whether the *Independent* stayed in the case to the end. There was certainly a time when its proprietors lost interest in the case, and even the local branch of the Union, in the shadow of defeat, began to doubt the wisdom of going on.

At the beginning we held it almost inconceivable that we could lose the case, no matter what wavering caprices were characteristic of English law. Before our faith was justified the proceedings took three stages. First the *Sheffield Telegraph* (Sir William Leng & Co.) sought an interim injunction. This was refused. I did not attend this preliminary canter,

but was asked to go to the next hearing when Mr. Justice Eve heard the case. My colleagues had warned me that hostile counsel would try to make me look a perfect fool in the witness box, and that I should have to be sharper than usual to avoid this humiliation. So I was almost quivering with apprehension when I submitted myself to questioning in a crowded little Court and saw the Kiplingesque figure gleaming opposition. But there was nothing dramatic. Indeed, to me, accustomed to the plain and angry speaking of Yorkshire police courts, almost everything in Mr. Justice Eve's court seemed to be done in a most courteous and even ceremonious manner. The judge impressed me forthwith as a kindly man. When opposing counsel tried to get me to admit that I had not cared what I said to Chandler so long as I achieved my purpose, his lordship intervened with the remark that there was no need to treat me as a hostile witness. I remember that passage because from my conscientious point of view a main issue was whether it was Chandler or myself who had broken the agreement on which I joined the paper. I claimed to remember clearly all the points he had made on the island platform. Was it not natural that I should remember them all, since for me this interview was a great turning point of my life? I was quite certain that no radius clause was ever mentioned at that, to me, most memorable meeting. And it seemed to me remarkable that this chief reporter of mature experience, who had engaged so many reporters and had so many meetings in his life, should claim to remember with equal clearness and circumstantiality an interview which had occurred three years before. I felt indignation, and probably showed it in the box, that he should challenge so bluntly my story of an interview which I was likely to remember far better than he could. I made no accusation against his honour, but I thought then, and I think to-day, that his memory of what he should have told me had become confused after three years with his memory of what he actually said.

I remember the long, drooping figure of our leading counsel, then Lord Robert Cecil, now Viscount Cecil, famous for his advocacy of the League of Nations. He had an austere intellectual air and was treated with deep respect by everyone in court from the Judge downwards. I remember making him smile, and the court laugh, by a suggestion I offered in my eagerness and inexperience. Chandler, in his evidence, had sought to show that I acquired valuable secrets by working on the *Sheffield Telegraph* and might have disclosed them profitably when working for the *Independent*. Asked to give an instance, he said the *Telegraph* had obtained a great deal of material in advance about a meeting of the British Association, and it was important that all of it should be kept exclusive. A look at the Judge convinced me that he was impressed by this point. When Lord Robert Cecil had finished asking me questions he said: "I do not think there is anything else I need ask you." Thereupon I remarked brightly: "Perhaps you would ask me about the British Association—I could explain all about the advance information." There was great amusement in court, but I did not share it, especially as Lord Robert would not take my hint. What I wanted to explain to the Court was that to talk about exclusive advance information about a British Association conference was bunkum. Every daily paper in the country could and did get advance

copies of many of the papers to be read at the Conference. This is common knowledge among newspaper men, but I am afraid some people, impressed by what Chandler said, thought that by exceptional enterprise and influence he had obtained information beyond the reach of others. When I resumed my seat George Leach whispered, "I don't think you gave much away." Leach was a man of judicial quality. He did not offer ready encouragement and I prized his approval. One point in the case which puzzled me in my inexperience was our bringing out so conspicuously that I was a minor when I signed the agreement and had no independent advice. I did not see much point in winning the case on those grounds since presumably it would leave untouched the really important question whether a radius agreement could be enforced against one who signed it as an adult. But the Judge accepted the argument that I automatically ratified the agreement on reaching the age of 21.

The case had been thoroughly discussed in every newspaper office in the country. Eminent journalists were eager to come forward on our behalf. One who gave evidence as to the customs of the profession was Mr Robert Donald, then editor of the *Daily Chronicle*. He was a gruff but sympathetic man, and he thrilled me to the core by saying that if the case went against me I must call upon him at the *Chronicle* office and see about a job there. Another witness for us was Mr. A. G. Gardiner, then editor of the *Daily News*, who impressed me by his cool mind and quick effectiveness of expression. When they and others had finished their evidence victory seemed assured, but to my overwhelming surprise the Judge granted the *Sheffield Telegraph* the injunction for which it asked to restrain me from continuing in the service of the *Independent*.

Having lost both Stage I and Stage II of the case, I was now in a position that cost me some sleepless nights. Could I expect my colleagues to throw good money after bad? Was I to risk yet another public rebuff or would it be better for me to seek employment in another town? Some of my Sheffield colleagues thought we ought to drop the case. Any indecision was soon settled by stalwarts of the Union, especially, I think, George Lethem, W. N. Watts and George Leach. Lethem came to Sheffield and with repeated hammerblows of logic pounded our doubts to bits. The meeting was at first for ceasing to fight, but Lethem inspired it with his own tenacity. It is rarely that an audience is converted and made to reverse its judgment as this one was. So it was decided to appeal and in due course the three judges at the next stage of the proceedings decided unanimously that the agreement was bad and could not be sustained. We won completely. I was not called on to attend these proceedings, but heard the news in Sheffield. There was great rejoicing in the *Independent* office that night. J. B. Hobman, always trenchant with the pen, wrote some exulting notes upon the decision. I went on with my leaders and specials for the *Evening Mail*, and for a little while I had the uncomfortable experience of being occasionally pointed out as the man who had fought the *Sheffield Telegraph*—truly a compliment, but one which should have been shared with all members of the N.U.J.

We had smashed the timeless Radius Agreement and therefore our full object was achieved; but beyond the justification of a principle my own benefit from the case was short-lived. The *Evening Mail* did not prosper.

Presently we were told it was to cease publication; we put out our last bill, bearing the words, "God Save the King," to the puzzlement of passers-by; and the next morning I was off by early train to London to resume my wandering life. Any fear I had had that I should be a marked man because I had fought employers soon vanished. For a time the case was often mentioned to me by employers when I was seeking work, and all agreed that the clause should never have been imposed and the Union was right to smash it. The *Sheffield Telegraph* proved magnanimous, as one might have expected of so fine a paper. It printed some of my articles from the front in the last war, offered to it by R. R. Whittaker, who acted as my honorary agent. More than once kind things were said about me in its column, "Current Topics." I did not see Col. Clifford again until May 1933, when the British Broadcasting Corporation opened its present studio in Woodhouse Lane, Leeds. I told him who I was, and the old warrior's eyes brightened. "We must talk over old days," he said, and he made me sit by him for a while. "What a pity all that happened," he said. I replied: "I am sorry it was you we fought. No one could ever have said that you were bad employers." We talked of the case a little more. Then he said, "Well, I'm glad it did you no harm. We never wanted to hurt you personally." He made me promise to call upon him the next time I was in Sheffield, but before I went to that town again he was dead.

When Mr. Justice Eve retired in 1937 at the age of 81 I wrote to him, perhaps rather impulsively, to express my best wishes and to tell him that I had once been before him, in what was known as the Radius Agreement case, but had managed to keep out of the hands of the law ever since. He was kind enough to reply at some length, told me that he well remembered the case, mentioned the chief issues, and concluded by wishing me a useful career. Not every judge would have cared to be reminded of a decision of his own which had been so emphatically reversed. There is much I have forgotten about the case. Perhaps here and there my memories of it have been distorted a little under the influence of time. If I have done anyone an injustice in these recollections it is only by accident. I shall remember to the end the eagerness with which members of the young Union came to the rescue when injustice to one of their members called for bold and brave action. I have always been proud to be a journalist and had the warmest respect for my colleagues. The Radius Case is one of the main reasons for the affection I feel for brother journalists.

Some little difficulty in the expansion of the Union in the North East was caused by the existence of a small organisation called the Northern Society of Journalists. Formed chiefly through the efforts of Mr. J. R. B. Cassells, of the *North Star*, Darlington, in the year 1900, it was not a trade union, but worked on trade union lines. Its membership was restricted to working journalists, even editors not being admitted. Some who were afterwards prominent in the N.U.J. had joined, including G. H. Lethem, when he worked at West Hartlepool for the *North*

Eastern Gazette, and F. W. H. Reed, who settled at Newcastle after leaving Southampton, and joined the Union Executive in 1912. The Northern Society did useful work in the way of mutual help, though only on a small scale. In 1904-5 its membership numbered 74 and it had a credit balance of £76. Its area was Northumberland, Durham and the Cleveland district of Yorkshire. Negotiations between the N.U.J. and the Society for a working agreement took place in 1908, but when the Union grew in strength in the North East the Society's days were obviously numbered. It had the distinction of being the first journalistic body to pay unemployment benefit and curiously enough Reed was the first member to receive the benefit, the cost of which was met by a weekly levy of sixpence on the members. The Union had offered to take over the Society and make it a Union branch. Meakin and Lethem went to Darlington to explain the idea, but Cassells would not agree. He was aggrieved that he had not been consulted before the Union was formed, and the position was not eased when it was explained that the men of Manchester had never heard of him or his Society. Cassells was a "bonnie fechter" for the working journalist and it was a pity that he was not among the Union pioneers. When the Newcastle branch of the Union was formed in 1911 an effort to maintain a working agreement between the Union and the Society ceased and other Union branches came into existence round about. Members of the Society joined the Union, and the Society was dissolved, its end being hastened by the advent of State insurance in 1912.

Scarcely had the Executive got the radius agreement case off its hands than the *Sheffield Evening Mail* was suspended and several sub-editors and reporters were thrown out of work. Freed from competition the opposition evening paper began to reduce its staff. The local branch received the immediate support of the Executive, and within four weeks of the suspension the ten members affected, with one exception, had by the efforts of Union officials obtained other situations. After Sheffield, Bristol. The stoppage of the *Bristol Mercury* (which has already been referred to) was another test of the Union's resources at the end of 1909. It was one of those absorptions which come suddenly as a tragic surprise to unsuspecting staffs. The Executive were informed of the position by telegrams and Watts acted with such promptitude that the displaced men next morning had messages of sympathy and help and in 24 hours the first lists of vacancies were in the hands of every man. These were supplemented by

telegrams, two or more a day, to individual members. The majority of the victims were soon in harness again, and financial backing helped in the cost of removals. The story of the death of the *Mercury* was graphically told by "X.Y.Z." (I strongly suspect J. W. T. Ley of being the writer) in the *Journalist* in April, 1930. Not even the editor had the slightest inkling of the paper's doom. The paper had been purchased by its Conservative rival. "We were just chucked out, with not a word of regret, not a note of any kind." Years after the writer reminded Watts of the wonderful way the Union then rallied round its members. "Ah," said Watts, "that was a great opportunity. It was our first big chance of the kind and I saw it directly I heard the news. I look back on the *Bristol Mercury* smash as a vital point in the history of the Union." The spirit of camaraderie displayed at the time was re-called and Watts spoke of it as the true Union spirit, which was something more than the securing of better wages. That reply wire to Bristol, said "X.Y.Z." must have cost Watts five shillings to send; it was more in the nature of a letter than a telegram.

The Union's invasion of Fleet Street in April, 1909, was perhaps in the light of its eventual significance, the most productive of the early activities. At that time the new movement had made but little impression on the greatest of all newspaper centres. London as a whole had in 1908 contributed only a moderate quota to the income:—Woolwich (S.E. & E. London) £39/19/10; North London £44/7/8; Central London (*i.e.*, Fleet Street) £57/1/2. The North Country had done much better: Manchester £203/13/10; West Riding £221/16/1½; while South Wales and Monmouth ran them close with £175/2/5. Moreover the affairs of the Central London branch had not been in very good order, and had only just been overhauled under the supervision of the Executive. So altogether the visit of the A.D.M., the second in the succession, was timely. The headquarters staff came bearing honours from a victorious field, and the memorable dinner held at Anderton's Hotel on the eve of the conference was announced as "a celebration of the successes of the Union in Parliament and in the Law Courts." It was the first Union dinner of which there is any record, and it proved worthy of that distinction. As one of the rank and file, representing a small branch, I was so impressed by the assembly of some of the giants of journalism that, despite the passing of the years and the memory of many comparable events since, the

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occasion lives clearly in mind today. The President (G. H. Lethem), then in the full tide of his powers, made the best use of the opportunity of sending home to the heart and conscience of that company the appeal of the Union. Dr. T. J. Macnamara, M.P., had proposed the toast, "The N.U.J.", and Lethem's reply was forcible and persuasive. He disposed of the myth that journalists differed from other classes of workers and could not combine in a trade union as others did, and he boldly used the word "wages" instead of "salaries," which had been the recognised and conventional term for the exiguous rewards of professional skill. All this without a perceptible tremor, even at the top table. Barrie brought out the difference in "When a Man's Single," where Thrums passes its verdict on the achievements of its son, Rob Angus, in Fleet Street. Snecky wonders "What Rob has in the wy o' wages." "That's been discuss't in every hoose in Thrums," says Sam'l, "but there's no doubt it's high, for it's a salary; ay, it's no wages."

"There are in London," said the President, "many men in highly paid positions who are apparently far removed from the possibility of financial distress, or the need of the Union's help in any form. To those fortunate men we present the record of our work on behalf of the less fortunate members of our calling, and hope their feelings of comradeship will lead them to realise that this is a work in which they might take, not only a part, but a leading part . . . Out of our efforts has sprung a feeling which, without reducing the proper professional keenness, has led men to see in their fellow journalists, not enemies to be hated, but friends to be respected, comrades to be helped. Here is a great work with a noble end in view. To the journalists of Fleet Street I appeal. Come in and share the honour of bringing the Union to its full strength and its full usefulness." Mr. A. G. Gardiner said he did not think the Union had come a day too soon, and he gave practical effect to his advice to every journalist in London to join, by joining himself. So, too, did Mr. G. K. Chesterton, after the delivery of some characteristic paradoxes and homilies. Mr. S. L. Hughes sustained his reputation for wit as "Sub Rosa," in proposing "Fleet Street." Mr. C. W. Bowerman, M.P., then the general secretary of the London Society of Compositors, welcomed journalists into the trade union fold and paid tribute to the rapidity and skill with which the Union had been organised. Thus was the hot gospel of unionism proclaimed to the aristocracy of journalism, and James Haslam rejoiced over it in good honest

fashion in a *Clarion* article after the conference, entitled " Gentlemen of the Press." Much faithful preaching and courageous example was needed in following years before Fleet Street was converted, but the process began in earnest at this dinner of 1909, for Central London soon reported a large accession of members. The editor of the *N.U. Journal*, in his leading article on the A.D.M., used the headline " London has capitulated." but realising that this was too bold a claim, he qualified it by saying: " Perhaps London has not capitulated to the National Union, but we have made a breach in the walls."

After the conviviality and the celebration came two days of serious business, transacted by a meeting composed of nine members of the Executive and 47 branch delegates. The annual report stated that the membership had reached a total of 1,217, and the number of branches had increased from 20 to 40. The work already done by the Union had justified its existence. The reality of the benefits provided was proved by three telling cases of distress relieved. In spite of the cost of benefit and of heavy organisation and legal defence charges, the reserve funds exceeded £1,000, and a first investment of £500 was earmarked as a guarantee of benefit payments. The victories in the courts establishing the right to full pay during illness, and the Union principle in opposition to radius agreements; the prompt placing of members thrown out of work at Bristol and Sheffield; and the legislative achievement in the two Acts already mentioned, were quoted in proof of the Union's claim, and in support of the appeal to extend the membership to every corner of the country and to develop the full work of the Union. On the initiative of Surrey and Sussex branch the question of establishing an effective employment and intelligence department was referred to the Executive, who promised speedy attention. The same branch, however, failed to get support for a motion deprecating the inclusion of the toast of " The Press " at public dinners; but they carried a proposal that all Union printing should be done by trade union printers, and also a request to the Executive to endeavour to prevent the " disadvantages connected with advertisements of vacant journalistic posts." On the motion of Plymouth the Executive was asked to consider the question of appointing a paid organising secretary.

A report on salary conditions presented by a member of the Executive (name not given) led to much discussion. Watts said that the position in many districts " was absolutely appalling, and

this economic problem was a menace to the profession." It was realised that the Union must be stronger before effective action could be taken. The President said that patience and loyalty, combined with enthusiastic organisation, were the only means to success. They hoped the time would come when the possession of the Union card would be regarded as testimony that the holder was a good journalist and reliable man. They wanted employers to understand that it was the desire of the Union to raise the standard of the profession generally, as they recognised this to be one of the surest ways of raising the standard of wages and comfort. The delegates decided that the Executive should ask the branches "to say what steps, if any, they desire the National Executive to take with the object of removing grievances arising out of low salaries and bad conditions." On the motion of W. Meakin (Leeds), in view of the important problems facing the Union, officials and members everywhere were urged to put forward every possible individual effort to increase the membership, so that the hands of the Executive might be strengthened in any action to be undertaken. The hardships caused to journalists by the call to work seven days a week led the conference to favour a general campaign in support of the Bill to secure a weekly day of rest.

Before the close of the conference C. F. Tuckett, hon. secretary of Central London branch, said the A.D.M. had brought home to Fleet Street what the Union stood for, and he was confident that soon they would rival the membership of the biggest branches in the Union. One of the Central London delegates was J. T. Smith, a zealous worker for the Union in Fleet Street in the earlier days. The President of the 1909 A.D.M. has "grateful memories of him as a kind and helpful man." In 1910 he was thanked by the Executive for a valuable piece of work. He had appeared before the Home Office Committee on Coroners Courts as the representative of the Union and urged the claim of working journalists to admission to those courts as a right. Smith made out a case there which, in the opinion of the Executive, was "absolutely unanswerable." Another name that should be mentioned as that of a pioneer in Fleet Street is H. Prosser Chanter, who took a leading part in starting the Central London branch and long maintained his interest. Those of us who were in the movement in those uphill struggles remember with affection C. F. Tuckett, who rendered fine service until the coming of the Great War, in which he made the supreme sacrifice in 1918. He

had a great talent for organisation and never spared himself when the Union call first came to London. He relinquished the secretaryship of Central London on going to the Gallery, where he became the active secretary of the Parliamentary Branch. In the former secretaryship he was succeeded by Horace Sanders.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOMECOMING IN 1910: A STRIKE ADVENTURE.

Sure, I said, Heaven did not mean,
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.
"*Ruth*" (*Tom Hood*).

What you can do, or dream you can, begin it;
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.
"*Faust*" (*Goethe*).

THE choice of Manchester for the A.D.M. in 1910 had the sentimental significance of a home-coming. The organisation which had been evolved in that City came back with the record of a good beginning. It earned the meed of a generous tribute from the *Manchester Guardian*. The first leading article, alluded to in my first chapter, spoke of the rapid progress made in three years by "this first serious effort to organise employed journalists." In place of the tradition of disorganisation, the cult of careless individualism which had marked the English journalists' career, the Union had given a much-needed sense of security. The writer pictured the Bohemianism of the profession and hoped that with the aid of the Union, whose aims it commended as a "public interest," a welcome transformation would be wrought. A typical *Guardian* accent appeared in the welcome it gave to the assurance "that these aims will be pursued in a spirit of frank good-will towards those through whom journalists are immediately employed and towards the public who employ both." The first N.U.J. dinner in Manchester was a notable event. Mr. Harold Cox made a speech which reads strangely now. He expressed satisfaction that the Union would be able to stand free of the trade guild ideas inherited by older trade unions, and declared that they could not be a close corporation. The great glory of the journalistic profession was its open-

ness to all the world. It did not lend itself to rigid rules, but in spite of that he thought it useful to have a society for men whom Mr. Keir Hardie would call "wage slaves." According to Mr. Cox, the Union had to dismiss from its mind all conception of a standard rate of wages, or a minimum rate or regular hours of work! Mr. C. E. Montague was the other guest of note and his speech came nearer to reality. Any working journalist who respected himself and his profession, he said, could regard the aim of the Union with nothing but the deepest admiration and gratitude. This was good hearing for Union leaders who had to wear down stubborn prejudices against trade unionism.

England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales were all represented by delegates at the A.D.M.—Scotland and Ireland for the first time. The Union had 54 branches and 1,692 members. At this conference was begun the practice of a full-dress opening speech by the President, and it survives to this day, for the Union has not succumbed to the fashion of having the oration printed and "taking it as read." Though journalists are not always orators by nature they can become so by grace, and the spoken word still has power, as it most decidedly had when Charles Dickens and G. A. Sala were real masters of assemblies. Lethem took full advantage of the innovation to point with pride to the achievements of the young Union, and to the vast opportunities ahead. He administered the necessary corrective to the doctrine proclaimed by Mr. Cox the night before by showing how, in regard to salaries and conditions of work, "fundamental trade union principles can be effectively applied." The delegates proceeded to make the application by taking the first step in any wage movement, that of gathering statistics. Haslam, ever a leader in real trade union action, moved a resolution from Manchester directing the branches to prepare returns showing the rates of wages for reporters and sub-editors in their respective districts, together with expressions of opinion as to the steps that might be taken by the Executive in cases where the remuneration was considered inadequate. The delegates were practically unanimous that an effort should be made to improve wages and conditions where they were unsatisfactory, but different views were expressed as to the best methods to adopt. Several speakers deprecated the low value some journalists placed upon their services. To illustrate this Haslam read the following extract from a letter received from the manager of a weekly newspaper: "Since I came here I have advertised several times for junior reporters and

it has been shocking to have applications from reporters of 40 and 50 years of age—married men and really competent journalists —anxious to get a job at 25/- or 27/6 a week." The motion was carried, with the rider that the Executive should arrange the forms and directions of the inquiry and that members who desired it might make returns anonymously. The work thus inaugurated soon made the "live" branches busy, but years were to pass before the Union was able to launch wage movements on a general scale. The privilege of anonymity in disclosing details of what the average journalist had regarded as a purely private concern, was found useful in our investigations in Central London, and also in other districts. The well-trained trade unionist could not understand such diffidence, but journalists were not yet trade unionists.

There was much debate on proposals to establish a Widow and Orphan Fund. Some thought the Benevolent Fund should provide for widows and orphans; others objected to the principle of voluntary contribution; and others that the Union should not do anything which might be interpreted as competition with the Newspaper Press Fund. This latter point Watts cleared up by reading correspondence, of which note has already been made. Various amendments were discussed and defeated and in the end it was decided:

A Fund shall be raised by voluntary contributions from members, by grants from management fund balance of branches and collections at Union gatherings. This Fund shall be at the disposal of the N.E.C., and shall be used for the relief of the widows, orphans, and other dependents of members left in distressed circumstances. Branches shall have the right to make recommendations to the N.E.C. in cases where they consider grants necessary, and on such recommendations the N.E.C. may make such grants as they consider desirable. Grants shall be made only in cases of acute financial need. The Annual Delegate Meeting shall have power to allocate for the purposes of this Fund, the interest up to £50 per annum accruing from Union moneys invested in Trustee Stocks; and also to allocate from the Central Fund to this Fund a sum not exceeding £50 in any one year.

Such was the day of small things. Grants were made first in 1911, when the amount given was £10. In 1935 the total was £3,095; 1938, £3,856; and 1942, £2,981. Among matters dealt with in the report for 1909-10 was the effort to remove grievances connected with unfair competition by non-journalists, or "to name it quite plainly 'blacklegging.'" The worst offenders were ministers of religion, many of whom touted for orders for reports of church conferences. The Nonconformist bodies had been cir-

cularised, it being pointed out how unfair was this competition with working journalists, "admittedly an underpaid class." Only two of the bodies had had the courtesy to reply, but the Executive said they were determined to pursue their efforts "until the scandal has been removed."

The successful launching of an Employment Bureau gave the A.D.M. much satisfaction. This department, which has steadily grown in usefulness and is to-day vigorously at work, received attention at the first conference in 1907, when the question of forming a "labour bureau" was referred to the executive for report. Brown's scheme presented in 1909 proposed that branch secretaries should send to the General Secretary weekly details of all journalistic vacancies, actual and prospective, in their districts. The General Secretary would then issue the information to all branch secretaries, who would communicate it to members out of work, or under notice. The idea that members in employment, but who desired to better themselves, should have the advantage of the list was open to objections, but Brown favoured the method adopted in his area of reading out the information as to vacancies at branch meetings. The executive resolved to form the Department; that the register be open to those under notice and out of employment, and that the information gathered be made available to members who, being in employment, desired to change their position. Walter Meakin was appointed provisional honorary secretary to the Department. Evidently there was some misgiving about opening the register to men in employment, for when Meakin had a front page article in the *Journal* of August, 1909, on "our new enterprise," he made it clear that vacancies for the present would only be notified to members unemployed or under notice. It was provided that such members must give full information to their branch secretary, and references; then they would be registered and be furnished with information of vacancies by the Employment Secretary direct. The supremely important thing, wrote Meakin, was that each member should regard himself in honour bound to inform his branch secretary immediately of an actual or prospective vacancy on any paper that came under his notice. Two months later Meakin intimated in the *Journal* that information of vacancies would be sent to any member who satisfied his branch committee that his position was a precarious one. On this point evidence must be conclusive: a member's mere desire for a better post would not suffice. A remarkable success was quoted by Meakin.

A vacancy advertised in the usual anonymous way attracted about 100 applications. The Bureau sent full details to unemployed members, of whom several who had not been attracted by the advertisement were led to apply. The editor selected one from these subsequent applicants. In a very little while substantial results were achieved and many grateful letters were received from men who had been " placed " speaking of the sterling value of the Union.

At the 1910 A.D.M. the Executive reported that the outstanding feature of the year's work had been the establishment of the Bureau, which had justified itself from the outset by its excellent results. As to opening the register to members who desired a change of berth the Executive were forced to the conclusion " that a scheme of such wide scope would be unworkable unless a full-time paid secretary could be employed, and that even if the difficulties of administration were overcome, such wholesale notification of vacancies would be inimical to the interests of journalists from an economic point of view. If the operations of the Bureau led to a deluge of applications whenever a good post became vacant, a tendency to reduce salaries would inevitably follow. Further the spirit of fellowship which gives the Union its driving force makes it incumbent on us to direct our energies to the purpose of securing work for those members who have the misfortune to be unemployed, and it is fairly obvious that if we establish a keen competition for appointments between those who are out of work and those who have the advantage of sending their applications from a newspaper office, the latter will stand to win nearly every time." Doubtless that was a piece of cogent reasoning at the time, but afterwards the Union was to win minimum wage agreements which, given Union solidarity, would prevent undercutting. Also the full-time secretary was to come along in due course and, after Meakin had done a fine bit of voluntary service, the Bureau to become part of head office machinery. The whole incident which I have described is an interesting example of the economic evolution of the Union, and may be rounded off by quoting the present rule on the knotty point which caused anxiety over thirty years ago. The fact that a member is not qualified to receive unemployment benefit shall not preclude his being placed on the unemployment register if his branch endorses his application to be so treated.

Striking testimony to the utility of the Union in an unemployment crisis came from a Bristol delegate to the 1910 Conference:

The members there, he said, were full of gratitude for the splendid service of the Union when the *Bristol Mercury* suddenly ceased publication. Few, if any, of the members of its staff were the worse off for the disaster that overtook them. Fortunately the office was solid for the Union and most of the men thrown out of work obtained posts through Union agency without having to resort to unemployment benefit. A touching letter was read by the delegate from a member who had received benevolent grants: "Thank God, the Union has been of incalculable assistance to me. If only other journalists realised the fact they would not hesitate to join the Union, thanks to which I have been able to weather the storm." A glance through my file of recent executive papers shows in the most convincing manner what an effective service the Bureau is now giving to journalism as a whole—primarily to the working journalist, but also to the harassed managements seeking men to carry on amid the difficulties of war time. And most welcome of all is the telling evidence of the revolution wrought by the Union in the economic status of its members. When the Bureau started, salaries of 30/- a week, and even less, were offered to competent men. Among the scores of vacancies notified by Head Office in the early days of this war, the lowest rate mentioned for provincial weeklies was £4 12s. 6d. a week (including 5/- war bonus). As the rates are worth noting I mention a few:—Burton daily, a junior (junior scale at 20 £2 13s., rising to £5 8s. at 24); suburban senior reporters, Streatham £5 5s., Barnet £5 12s. 6d., Walthamstow £5 5s.; reporter, Oxford evening, £5 8s.; sub-editor, Nottingham, £6; East Anglian daily notified prospective vacancies for three sub-editors and two reporters, head office minimum £5 8s.; West of England daily, sub-editors and reporters, senior rate £5 13s. 6d; eight vacancies notified in a bunch at the end of 1941, weekly provincial minimum then £4 17s. 6d. Since the above figures were recorded there has been a further war increase, and many papers are now (1943) offering more than the minimum. The value of the Bureau to proprietors was shown by some unusual "wants" sent in. A London daily required an experienced picture man, minimum £9 9s. plus bonus, and more for a first rate man. A big London firm in search of transport and aircraft specialists sought the aid of the Union, salaries £500 a year. Most novel was the request of a north-western firm for a managing-editor, in view of the oft-arising question whether such men are eligible for Union membership. All this displays the war-time shortage

of staffs, but long before then the Bureau had become a Union service of steadily growing value.

One of the most striking personalities in Union history, J. E. Brown, who in popular tradition was consecrated "bishop," may be said to have been "ordained" deacon in 1909, by virtue of his contribution to the creation of the Employment Bureau, though a greater contrast between an episcopal dignitary and this jovial swashbuckler could not be imagined. With a merry twinkle in his eye and a cigarette ever in his lips, always ready for a yarn, a practical joke or a bit of serious work, he was popular at our meetings. His capacity for conviviality was prodigious; last in bed, he was always spick and span among the earliest risers, and was in sparkling form at the breakfast table. Once when an election was on he came down wearing posters with the legend "Vote for Brown and the Millennium," or something like it. With these qualities he was a successful Union missionary; and where his voice could not reach his letters did. Richardson once wrote that Brown "never ceased to cajole, chaff, drive or drag men into the Union." To read a Brown epistle on some point of Union strategy demanded concentration. Sometimes it would run almost to column length. For the championship in letter writing Brown, Foster and Ley would run a close race. Between them they must have done tremendous service in the propagation of the Union gospel. Wherever he went Brown was always a sort of advance agent for the Union. He was an enterprising free lance journalist, and must have sacrificed a big lot by giving so much time to the Union cause. He was secretary to the early committee which made inquiry into wages and conditions; and for a long time was secretary of the Propaganda and Organisation Committee, the work of which must have taxed even his capacity for correspondence. Literally he wrote thousands of letters, many of which I still possess. He was a useful member of some deputations to proprietors, having wide knowledge of provincial conditions. His election to the presidency in 1920 was something of a record. J. B. Hobman, the vice-president, to everybody's regret was prevented by illness from succeeding to the chair and Brown and T. Jay were nominated. On a card vote Brown had 2,169 votes and Jay, 2,100. This was the only time that a member was placed in the chair without serving the apprenticeship of the vice-presidency, except, of course, Spencer, the first president, and Lethem, who succeeded him in 1908. When Spencer declined a second year, in the absence of any vice-president, Lethem was

chosen, to his own surprise, and (at the moment) consternation, from the body of the kirk. Before he took to free-lancing Brown had held staff jobs in the Midlands and the North and in pre-Union days worked in contact with Watts. When he died in 1924 at the age of 58 the Union lost one of its most useful and willing workers.

An event of quite unusual importance occurred in the period covered in this chapter. It was the opening of the dispute with the *York Herald*, which was to figure in our records for several years. It first appears in the original minute book in November, 1909: "The question of the conditions of employment at the office of the *York Herald* was raised and left with the President (Lethem) and Meakin." The Executive did their best by representations and negotiations to reach a settlement, but in vain, until in September, 1911, they published the full story in the *Journal*. Before this, (June 3, 1911) they had issued a confidential circular addressed to "fellow members," notifying the fact that there was a dispute on the reporting staff of the *Yorkshire Herald* and *Yorkshire Evening Press*, York. The dispute arose, it was explained, from complaints that the men were constantly overworked. Lord Wenlock, the chairman of the directors, was written to, following a memorial to the directors, signed by the reporting staff at York and others who had been connected with the firm's papers. These efforts were unavailing and matters reached a head owing to the action of the Leeds branch in bringing the question before the N.E.C. The N.E.C. had a special meeting and remitted the whole matter to an Emergency Committee, which twice waited upon Mr. D. L. Pressly, the editor, and put to him suggestions for improving conditions of employment. The editor, however, refused to agree to them and discharged the chief reporter, who took a prominent part in the agitation for reform, for alleged misconduct. The other members of the reporting staff felt that the conditions were so bad that they determined to hand in their notices. The Emergency Committee agreed to that course and the Union would, of course, give them financial support. An appeal was made to all members to support the Executive and the staff in the stand they were taking, and not to apply for posts on the papers in dispute. The events leading up to this Executive circular must be recounted.

The oppression under which this reporting staff suffered was described in the memorial which they sent to the board of directors. Appended are extracts from it:

The reporters suffer from chronic overwork, not only due to the very long hours they are kept on duty, but to the excessive amount of copy each man is expected to turn out in the course of a day. It would be safe to state that the average number of hours worked per day is not less than twelve, and frequent instances could be quoted of men being on duty for longer periods, often with the shortest possible break for meals. This overwork is not exceptional, but continuous, as the staff is not big enough for the great area attempted to be covered . . . It is no infrequent occurrence for a reporter to be kept hard at work all day, writing practically several columns of matter, and then be called on to cover a night engagement as well, the hours extending from start to finish from ten a.m. till two a.m. On many occasions reporters have been on duty the whole of the time without a break. It is a usual occurrence for one *Herald* reporter to attend an engagement which two or even three members of the staff of the *Yorkshire Post* are detailed to cover, and he is expected to turn out just as long or an even longer report, free from all errors, and containing all the points that have been selected by every rival . . . A more serious matter, however . . . is the utter lack of sympathy between the editor and his staff. The staff enjoy none of the privileges granted to all reporters in well-regulated offices. No opportunity is afforded of enjoying recreative leisure. There is no system of week-ends off and no nights off. The whole staff is expected to be on duty every Sunday evening. In most offices the tendency is to curtail Sunday labours, but in this office the method seems to be adopted of finding work for the reporters . . . That there is considerable room for improvement is strikingly shown by the fact that there have been twenty-three changes in the reporting staff during the last five years . . . The conditions under which the staff have to perform their duties have long been reprobated by journalists in all parts of the North of England, and the staff could place before you abundant evidence that the office is generally regarded as the hardest driven amongst all the daily papers of the country.

One member of the staff furnished details to the N.E.C. of his heavy work in 1909, and they showed that, allowing for periods of heavy pressure and for the "slogs" which at times must fall to the lot of all journalists, the demands made were beyond toleration. Take a few sample days:—

Feb. 8—Attended Leeds Assizes and did one column of breach of promise case, and one and a half columns of slander action; returning to York in the evening had to report a Primrose League dance (another column) and as it was about 11 p.m. before the chief speaker spoke, I was kept at work till about 1 a.m., representing a 16-hour day and three and a half columns writing.

Feb. 9—Early train to Leeds Assizes; two and a half columns of slander case; evening, Women's suffrage meeting at York, half a column; detained in office till 1 a.m.

Feb. 11—York Guardians, two-thirds of column; Yorkshire Farmers' Union dinner, three and a half columns with a colleague; evening, Conservative whist drive and dance, half a column; late duty till 12-30 a.m.

Feb. 12—Early train to Wensleydale Agricultural Society meeting, one column; evening, lecture and whist drive, York, half column.

Feb. 13—East Riding Petty Sessions 10-30 a.m.; Monk Bar Methodist Jubilee, a column and a half.

May 21—Early train, after late duty, to Sheffield, Yorkshire Liberal Federation, one and three quarters columns; Prime Minister, evening, one and three quarters columns; 9 a.m. to 1 a.m.

May 31 to June 4—Bradford, Oddfellows Conference, two and a half to three columns per day and each evening on return to York detained in office.

And so the dreary record continued to January, 1910, with many days as bad as those above. That there was no improvement was shown by the fact that every member of the staff who signed the memorial left the office either voluntarily or involuntarily. While there were eight reporters at the time of the memorial these dwindled to four. The Executive had a strong case, but moved cautiously. Watts's letter to Lord Wenlock was a restrained protest, written as if more in sorrow than in anger. He said that the N.E.C. had seen the memorial sent to the directors, and, "speaking as men who collectively possess a large and varied experience in journalism, they have no hesitation in saying that the conditions of employment therein described are such as no self-respecting journalist could be expected to tolerate, and such as obtain on no other daily newspaper that they know of." Disclaiming any intention to interfere in details of office management, the N.E.C. felt "that the public opinion of the profession compels them to take some action with a view to bringing about an improvement." Relying on Lord Wenlock's reputation for fair-mindedness they asked for an interview with him. This was in April, 1910, and on May 6 Lord Wenlock replied that the directors had unanimously agreed that no advantage would be gained by granting an interview to the Union. The memorial, he said, had been proved to contain "many inaccuracies of fact," and the directors had satisfied themselves "that there is no cause of complaint amongst the staff at the present time." On June 25 Lethem reported to the Executive that he had been informed of a distinct improvement at the *Herald* office, but the Executive replied to Lord Wenlock warning him that if fresh complaints were received they would be compelled to take "such steps as may be deemed advisable to secure an improvement."

No further overt move occurred till March 29, 1911, when the Leeds branch proposed to send a letter to the directors about

renewed protests from the staff. The N.E.C. approved the letter and arranged for Lethem, Spencer, Meakin and Watts to visit York and "ascertain how far the members of the staff are prepared to go to ensure for themselves better conditions of employment." On May 20 the N.E.C. had a special meeting which was attended by C. R. C. Nixon, the chief reporter of the *Herald*, who brought a message from his staff that they would not continue work unless they obtained an improvement. The N.E.C. thereupon decided "to take action," to send a deputation to Mr. Pressly, the editor of the *Herald*, and to empower the sub-committee to take such steps as they thought necessary. Nixon was asked to present a statement of grievances to the editor and was instructed to ask his men not to break their contracts in the event of not meeting with success, but to allow the Committee to negotiate for them. This sub-committee included J. H. Harley (who had succeeded Lethem as President), Lethem, Spencer, Meakin, Menzies, Proudfoot, Richardson and Watts. Some sub-committee, but a critical decision had to be faced.

It was one of the big decisive moments in Union annals. Calculated strike action was a new adventure; resources and reactions had to be considered with the utmost care. On May 21 Watts received a telegram from Nixon: "Allegations denied. Redress refused. Immediate action necessary. Try and arrange meeting York." As a sort of last effort for peace Watts wired to Mr. Pressly asking him to receive a deputation and he accepted. Lethem, Spencer, Meakin and Watts saw him and he agreed to terms of settlement as follows:—(1) Members of the staff to have a regular day off weekly in turn under fair conditions; (2) the Secretary to put Mr. Pressly in communication with a few reporters with a view to the appointment of one of them; (3) Nixon to continue on the staff as chief. The deputation went home congratulating themselves on what seemed to be a Union victory, but next day Watts received a telegram from Nixon: "Pressly totally denies agreeing anything yesterday. Says will have nothing to do with Union or Union men. Demands apology from us under penalty." Watts tried to obtain from the editor confirmation of the agreement, but Mr. Pressly replied by making a charge against Nixon. That was a tactic not new in disputes and the N.E.C. countered by asking for an explicit undertaking to conform to the following proposals: (1) Regular reporting staff to be increased to a minimum of six within six weeks; (2) each reporter to have one whole day off in every week from

July 1; (3) the salary of P—— to be increased as from second payday in June. On May 31 Mr. Pressly wrote expressing surprise at the "new terms. I was open to a friendly arrangement. I am not prepared to be dictated to by any outside body as to the precise numbers, salaries or engagements of the staff and I therefore decline to assent to the terms of your letter." Mr. Pressly ended with the statement that Nixon would be dismissed. Still anxious for a peaceful issue the N.E.C. held an inquiry at York into the charge against Nixon and found that there was no substance in it. Already Nixon had been assured that if victimised he would be supported. In view of Nixon's discharge two reporters tendered notices, with N.E.C. authority. Another reporter, whose health called for release, gave notice and tendered a month's money to avoid working it out. The money was accepted. When the notices were handed in the Union was legally in dispute with the *Herald*, and the Executive on June 3, 1911, issued the notice to members already referred to. The dispute was advertised in the Press and the office was picketed. A Union member who took a post on the paper was expelled, as was a district reporter who accepted transfer to the head office.

In the instalment of his History which appeared in March, 1926, Richardson, with personal memories of these events at close range and with eight years' experience as general secretary, wrote thus:

These things were done in a tentative and even a timid manner. We had not shaken off the tradition of timidity, respectability, what you will, that has always made straightforward trade union action alien to the nature of journalists. For instance, Watts did not instruct members not to go to York. He said he was "instructed to express the hope that none of our members will apply," etc. Again, we did not carry the fight along all fronts as we should do now. The grievance was of the reporters. The sub-editors made no complaint . . . so long as they were not asked to do reporting work the E.C. felt that the dispute could be localised to the reporters' room! Whether they were to be allowed to handle copy from blackleg reporters does not appear from the records and memory is mute (perhaps of malice) on the point. But Mr. Pressly, who was finding it extremely difficult to get reporters, tried to get the subs. to cover engagements. And they obeyed! That forced the N.E.C. to take notice and it passed a resolution to the effect that any member of the Union who entered or remained in the employment of the *Yorkshire Herald* for a longer term than he was bound by the terms of his engagement should be expelled from the Union. Thereupon the chief sub-editor handed in his notice, as did two district reporters. Mr. Nixon secured a better post immediately through Union influence. Some of the other men were placed, and those who were not were paid full salaries. One of the reporters was getting

£1 15s. 0d. a week—and yet the grievance was not as to salaries, but purely as to overwork!

A melodramatic second chapter from Richardson completed the story. Mr. Pressly, who was a pugnacious man, informed Watts, when Nixon had been dismissed and two reporters had left, that the York police had instructions to search for and arrest three members of the Union "who had surreptitiously entered the office after the night staff had gone and either stole or destroyed part of the contents of a letter addressed to the chief reporter." All this ended in smoke, but the editor was able somehow or other to replenish his staff. Meeting at York on July 1, 1911, the N.E.C. received a letter from the chief reporter resigning his membership of the Union. As he was in arrears with his contributions his resignation was not accepted. He was expelled. Two other members of the staff were invited to attend the meeting and explain their conduct, but they did not respond. A general warning as to expulsion, and an offer to any Union member then on the paper who supported the Union and left, to pay him full salary until he secured employment, was, on the motion of Richardson, seconded by Spencer, carried by nine votes to one. One member of the *Herald* accepted the offer, but he would not run any risks and secured a copy of the resolution signed by the President, the Secretary and a trustee. The resolution expelling him was rescinded, and he afterwards drew a considerable sum from the Union. Another Union member employed by the *Herald* was voted £200 to enable him to emigrate to Australia. Yet another threatened to appeal to the A.D.M. against his expulsion, but he could not stand the conditions at the office and resigned, whereupon the N.E.C. paid him 30/- a week. One errant member was severely admonished by the N.E.C. for continuing to work after other Union members had left, but explained that he desired to see for himself what the conditions were, and he found them so bad that he decided to leave. The paper went on getting men but was unable to keep them. Non-unionists could not stand the strain and once five of them downed pencils and appealed to the Union for financial support. Mr. Pressly issued a statement to the newspaper proprietors of the country, in which he averred that the Union's wicked agitators were the cause of all the trouble. He spoke of the "dirty, boycotting" advertisement running in the *Daily News* and other papers, warning journalists against the *Herald*. The Executive in reply published the full story in the *Journal*. They got the sympathy of the Yorkshire Trades

Council, and, wrote Richardson, "one memorable night in the autumn of 1913 several of us visited York, and from a lorry addressed a meeting in the Market Square. Mr. Pressly was partly concealed behind the curtain of a bedroom window. . . There were between two and three thousand people there. The day was November 4, and Mr. Pressly came out with a leading article on the subject next day headed 'Guy Fawkes Day Anticipated.' He was still feeling the effects of his roasting."

The dispute dragged on; the Union offered to accept arbitration or the Industrial Court, but the editor and the directors would not give way though the reputation of their paper was clearly suffering. Then came the Great War and "the little Yorkshire Prussian" (Richardson's phrase) was forgotten. He died soon after the Peace, and the Union ban on the *York Herald* was lifted in September, 1922, having lasted eleven years. The resolution embodying this decision stated: "The N.E.C. authorises the York branch to accept as members of the Union men on the staff of the *Yorkshire Herald* who are eligible for membership." It is my task here less to moralise, than to record facts. However it is of interest to quote Richardson's view of this famous event in our history: "It was a paradox of a dispute. It was both ineffective and effective. It did not improve conditions in the *Yorkshire Herald* office at the time, but it improved them in many another bad office . . . It cost a great deal of money. And at the moment there was little tangible to show for it. But there were invisible imports of comfort and security for scores of working journalists." A footnote to the articles of 1926 ought, perhaps, to be reproduced now: "This is ancient history. The Union ban on the *Yorkshire Herald* was removed shortly after the death of Mr. Pressly, and Union members now work there. It is a fair office." The last sentence is the measure of a Union success after a long struggle, and the York episode is typical of the great transformation wrought in the whole texture and life of British journalism. This may be claimed without disregarding the need for perpetual vigilance to circumvent the tendency to reaction and reversion which is the failing of the newspaper press as of every other human activity.

It is not always possible to obtain from a participant a vivid story of events thirty years old, but this York dispute is of such historic importance and interest, that I have made the effort, fortunately with good results. C. R. C. Nixon, the chief reporter, has sent me his memories. After his experiences in the North

he was in Fleet Street for many years, holding a responsible managerial post, and he says that what happened at York taught him what not to do with men when he was in authority. He writes:

Sheer desperation produced the strike at York. There was no planning, no semi-polite ultimatums, no "tactics" typical of trade unionism—just spontaneous combustion arising from the mental agony and physical fatigue of a regrettably small number of men who, until the last moment, clung to the idea that it was "the paper" and not the men that mattered. But for once journalists forgot "the paper" and walked out. I went to York in March, 1910. I had a rough passage. My first two years as a pupil-cum-junior reporter had ended dramatically at Bristol on the local *Daily Mercury*. Going on duty one night I found my colleagues gazing mournfully at a brief typewritten notice which bluntly stated that the paper had been sold and was closed down. The proprietors, rich men, offered me (and I believe most of the others) a fortnight's salary. The Union got us a month's.

In those days the *Daily News* ran a classified column for "Journalists, etc.", and answering a box no. I landed at York. Later the N.U.J. ran an ad. in this same column advising men to communicate with them before accepting situations at York. Of course I, and others, did not have this warning. The *Yorkshire Herald*, a Conservative daily run under the aegis of one or two famous county families, was edited by David Pressly. This gentleman had spent most of his newspaper life in Scotland. He lived frugally, and with him, whilst a day had 24 hours, only non-newspaper men wanted sleep and recreation. He thrived on nigger-driving, but he drove himself as hard as he tried to drive others. He was a man of grim appearance—a startling example of the body displaying the soul. His matted, gingery-grey beard alternately rested on his chest as he scanned proofs or wrote with an eager fist, or rose belligerently as he offloaded his vocal volleys. His first greeting to me was gruff. "Young man," he said, "I believe you are a journalist, but if you're not, and you have it in you, I'll make you one." I was somewhat disconcerted when he told me that his staff was ramshackle, and that he was seeking a youthful follower to lick 'em into shape. As for salary, provided one obeyed His Master's Voice, even Aberdeen could off-load. So I began as a senior on £2 5s. 0d. a week. I was then just under twenty, and, after Bristol and its *Mercury débacle*, the job sounded good to me—especially as I had a lot of confidence in myself, and felt Mr. Pressly's bark was worse than his bite.

The staff was not exactly "ramshackle." It was rather a mixture due largely, of course, to Pressly's mannerisms. The chief reporter was a dear old silvery-headed gentleman who quite failed to stand up to the situation. He marked the diary as late at night as he could in order to escape Pressly's belief that he allowed the staff to go home too early. As all and sundry were expected to appear in the office at 9-30 a.m. and keep going till midnight with no thought of "half-days" I quickly discovered that I wanted all my youth to survive the conditions. There were some capable men on the staff and several incompetents. One of the

latter was rarely sober, and he could not write English, shorthand or type. He was kept, as I quickly discovered, as a standby when (as often happened) one of the bona fide reporters got a job elsewhere and departed with no ceremony. Pressly made it very clear to me that the N.U.J. was quite outside his calculations. The Institute of Journalists was quite proper, but he wanted no "socialistic trade unionism" in his office. The few of us who were members of the N.U.J.—and I make no apology for asserting that we were the brains and only real journalists in York—doggedly stuck to our membership and tried to get on with our jobs. Pressly was a member of the Institute.

After a few weeks Pressly called me into his room and told me that from that moment I was chief reporter; who was news editor in those days. The "subbing" was done by two elderly men who somehow steered clear of Pressly's salvos by the simple, if penal servitude, method of arriving at work at 6-30 p.m. and staying till 5-30 a.m. without a break and with rarely time to eat their sandwiches. My salary rose gratifyingly, but my ever-growing feeling of injustice rose even higher. My team was partly loyalist, partly rebellious. The N.U.J. men worked with me. The others, as was perhaps to be expected, not only tried to disorganise me, but intensified their spying and tale-carrying to the editor. For a few weeks I struggled on. I liked the responsibility and I was not afraid of hard work. But my attempts to introduce a rota of weekly holidays and to allocate reporting work so that men doing a police court from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. did not also have an afternoon as well as an evening engagement, began to get me into hot water. Matters reached a head when Pressly told me bluntly that I must do as he wanted, or else . . . He tried offering me a higher salary, and, that lure failing, he agreed to my arranging to let the married men have "a few hours off occasionally." For this concession I believe I had to thank Mrs. Pressly, a gentlewoman who tried to help us on more than one occasion.

In addition to a love for enslavement Pressly had a nasty habit of dropping chits to men which, once at least, nearly brought him physical violence. He would seize a card—he kept a gilt-edged packet on his desk—scrawl something really insulting on it and send a messenger boy to place it on the rack in the reporting room. As this rack was public, not only to the room but to all visitors, journalists naturally objected. My attempt to prevent the schoolmaster continually driving and beating (with chits) his pupils, only got me into hot water. Indeed, as punishment I began to get chits myself—only I had the concession of their being placed on my desk instead of on the board. So life dragged on until the inevitable crisis was reached. I had been in correspondence with dear old W. N. Watts at Manchester and one day he telephoned, asking me to run across for an executive meeting. I left that memorable conference with authority to take such action as the very next unpalatable order from the *Herald* editor merited. My fellows met me on York station. I told them I was going to present an ultimatum to Pressly, and I hardly had need to ask for their support. I went straight to the office and found Pressly's beard at its highest bristling point. He gave me no time to explain my position. "You have betrayed me," he said in effect. "You have been to Manchester to meet people who are no use to me or

you; and you apologise at once and do as I require, or else I relegate you on the staff and find another chief."

I have never regretted the course I took. I was already a young father and, along with my trusty colleagues, I had responsibilities which bore on me. But the time had come to stand up to a man who was not only the enemy of the N.U.J., but a menace to decent journalism. That night we walked out. Just that. It was probably very illegal, but the non-N.U.J. men remained, and, with the aid of two or three others who disliked Pressly in their own hearts but could be persuaded by small increases of salary to remain, the paper carried on. There is just this to add. The Union behaved nobly to those who stood by its mandate. We were all found jobs and assisted financially. I only hope that, in the years that followed, our attempt to show that slave tactics must not pay a dividend in journalism, fired others and so resulted in happier days, which, in my judgment, only the N.U.J. has found for our profession.

If Nixon had told this inspiriting story at an assembly of journalists I am sure he would have been greeted with the refrain "and so say all of us." To me it reads very much like some passages from "Nicholas Nickleby."

CHAPTER IX.

A FORWARD LEAP: NORTHCLIFFE BACKS THE UNION.

If you wish in this world to advance,
Your merits you're bound to enhance;
You must stir it and stump it,
And blow your own trumpet,
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!
"*Ruddigore*" (*W. S. Gilbert*).

THE National Insurance Act of 1911 meant for the Union both a revolution and a revelation. By the former is indicated the alteration in the structure of the Union, and the development in administration, required to work the Act; and the latter came when inquiry revealed the great percentage of members who were earning less than £160 a year, which was the limit in the Act below which non-manual workers were included in its provisions. It was the scandal of indigence and humiliating conditions of work which called the Union into being, and inquiries made into the state of affairs all over the country had confirmed the need for action. Then came the Act which exposed in a flash, as by a searchlight, the wide prevalence of

those grievances. Many thousands of recruits flocked into the trade unions generally through the Approved Societies, as the unions were to be known when acting for insurance purposes under the Act. In this sudden expansion the N.U.J. had its full share. All wage earners covered by the Act were practically compelled to join their societies, and it became the concern of the N.U.J. to secure the most-favoured treatment possible for journalists under the Act, as in later days it was the object to provide the maximum scope of benefits.

During the testing period of the first stages of the Insurance business the President of the Union was J. H. Harley, M.A., a Scot who had found his sphere of work in London. He was not one of the actual founders, but in very early days he threw himself heartily into the movement. When it started he was in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons, first for the *Echo*, the London evening paper, and afterwards for the *Labour Leader*. At the opening moves in Central London Harley joined in, and for a long period he was an active member of that branch. In 1908 he went to the Leeds Conference as a Central London delegate, travelling there from Huddersfield, where he had attended the conference of the Independent Labour Party. At that A.D.M. he was appointed to the National Executive for the London district. When Lethem took the presidency at Manchester in 1910, for the third year, Harley was chosen as vice-president. In that first year he devoted himself with much energy to the work of organisation. One of the first jobs was a visit to Ireland with Watts to arrange a coalition with an existing union of journalists there. National Insurance was on the horizon when he became President at the Birmingham A.D.M., 1911, and he was in for a spell of arduous work. He played his part so well that in 1912 he was honoured by re-election to the office. Such re-election has been a rare distinction. Lethem served three times, Harley twice and F. E. Hamer twice (1914 and 1915), and these have been the only exceptions so far to the rule of single-year presidencies. Upon his election as president the *Journal* gave this little sketch of him (it was long before the days when a biography, with portrait, of the incoming President was a matter of course): "Our new President is the quintessence of what one may perhaps be allowed to call a fiery caution. For propaganda purposes he has a good platform manner. He can rouse a meeting to a desire to beat drums and hang out banners on the outer walls. But inside those walls—within the chamber

where the plan of campaign is drawn up—he is a moderating and a taming influence. For he has few illusions and not much sentimentality. He wants to know always how far it is safe to go, and then he will vote for going half the distance. If during his year of office the Union should be forced into doing those things, the mere mention of which causes shivers in Surrey, members may take it for granted that Mr. Harley, at least, has pleaded for every alternative compatible with the utility and the honour of the organisation and the interest of the members." In 1941 Harley received the distinction of election to honorary and life membership of the Union.

If the above is a true picture of the man 30 years ago, it can be said that his arts of conciliation found full and fruitful exercise in the Insurance negotiations into which he was soon plunged. He was in a familiar environment in the autumn of 1911 when he was lobbying at the House of Commons to secure changes in the National Insurance Bill in the interests of journalists. An interview was obtained with the accessible Mr. Lloyd George. Harley had the support of Tuckett, Harvey and Cox Meech, of the Parliamentary Branch, Goodman, Sanders and O'Donovan, of Central London, while P. W. Wilson, of the *Daily News*, had done good service as the *amicus curiae*. There was a "scene" in the House and the deputation had to wait long and patiently for the Minister. At last he came, bade the journalists enter and asked "Well, what's your point?" Harley at once directed the issue to the famous clause 47, governing sickness benefit, and eased the tension by a touch of humour. "Journalists are not a numerous class," he said, "but they are very ubiquitous." At this Lloyd George chuckled immensely and looked at his secretary for a responsive chuckle. O'Donovan chimed in, as the Chancellor was ready to concede the Union's point, to make sure that everything was watertight—though that is possibly the wrong word to apply to our genial Irishman. All done in a few minutes and the Chancellor bidding the party adieu, as he said, "to meet a body of infuriated agriculturists." The official shorthand writer made the comment that he never knew the work of a deputation conducted with such lightning speed.

There were differences of opinion as to the value, or otherwise, of the Insurance Act to journalists. There were bound to be, with a legislative innovation of this character. Some were in favour of seeking the exemption of journalism from its scope; in fact a formal endeavour was made in that direction. Richardson

definitely gave it the cold shoulder until it became law. One point of his that I remember is that the Act was a step to a servile State! But there were many things in the Union as well as outside it that H.M.R. could not cure and therefore had to endure. When it became clear that journalism must be included our thinkers applied themselves to the practical question of making the best of it. The most important matter was clause 47, mentioned at the interview with Mr. Lloyd George. Union policy was to become an Approved Society for the administration of journalists' benefits, and to get journalists placed in the special class of employees who had full pay from their employers in cases of temporary sickness. Their title to this privilege had been recognised in a very early case fought in the law courts, and its preservation within the framework of the Insurance Act was regarded as vital. The result of the appeal to the Chancellor was the insertion of a sub-section to Clause 47 stating: "Nothing in this section shall relieve any employer from any legal liability to pay wages during sickness to any person employed by him in accordance with any established custom." In spite of this concession the whole position of the Union in relation to the the Act was regarded with misgivings by many. These were expressed with his usual incisiveness by Richardson as editor of the *Journal*:

The Insurance Act has forced upon the Union a re-consideration of its position. Probably 80 per cent. of the members will become "insured persons"; that is employees receiving salaries of less than £160 a year are, willy nilly, forced to pay threepence a week towards the State insurance scheme. The benefits they will receive in return are, to our mind, negligible. Journalists are entitled by law and custom to their full salary during sickness without paying any premium, and therefore the necessity for the sick benefit part of the Act—and it is the chief part of the Act—disappears. However, ours is not to reason why, ours but to pay the threepences. Threepence a week plus 7½d. a week which the Union has hitherto cost each member, would be 10½d. That is a heavy drain on the men who are getting paid very small wages, and the Executive Council has come to the conclusion that, subject to the sanction of the branches, the contribution should be reduced to sixpence a week.

The position was surveyed at the Manchester A.D.M. at Whitsuntide, 1912. In ordinary circumstances the meeting should have been held at Glasgow at Easter, but the coal strike and the disorganisation of transport made the changes necessary. It was explained that Clause 47, which had by this time become a by-word in talk among "Nujjers," was introduced to meet the case of clerks, domestic servants and Scotch agricultural

labourers, and the supposition was that it would be a sufficient safeguard for journalists! But the sub-section above quoted was incorporated in the hope that it would meet our case. Disappointment was expressed that the Government had not given the Union representation on the Advisory Committee. The Insurance Commissioners were giving attention to the making of orders under Clause 47, but there were still signs in high official quarters that the particular situation of newspaper proprietors and journalists was not thoroughly understood. Some attention was given to the working of Clause 47. It would be the duty, it was explained, of every employer to decide whether he would apply to be put under the clause. If he did not apply it would not relieve him of his obligation to pay full wages during temporary sickness, and he would condemn himself and his staff to pay one penny more per week. If journalists came under the clause they would have the same right to payment of wages by the employer during sickness, or the employer could, as hitherto, determine the engagement. It was to the interest of the employer to come under the clause, and if there were any who were not willing to do so, the Union must endeavour to persuade them. The delegates decided that the Union should apply for recognition under the Act as an Approved Society, and then amended the rules where necessary to work the Insurance Act.

Useful action had been taken as mentioned before by W. E. Perks, then a Trustee, in framing proposals for the modification of rules. Having had to sub-edit Insurance Act copy for his paper at Plymouth he understood his subject and worked out his scheme with arithmetical calculations. Lethem as treasurer, had the scheme printed for a special Executive meeting, held in London to suit Perks's convenience, railway communication between Plymouth and Manchester being precarious, owing to the strike. As it was he reached the London meeting late, but not too late to thresh the matter out. The Executive decided to make the widest possible appeal to journalists to join the N.U.J. as their Approved Society. "The result," says Perks, "was that we roped in over a thousand new members and I contend that largely consolidated the Union." Lethem, who handled the whole question for the Executive at the A.D.M., paid tribute to the initiative of Perks. The scheme, proposed by Lethem and adopted by the conference after a close debate, had the following main effects:—Union contribution reduced from 7½d. to 6d. per week, thus meeting half the contribution of 3d. per week by members under the Act,

and within Clause 47; unemployment benefit period extended from thirteen to twenty-six weeks, £1 per week for the first thirteen weeks and 10/-. per week for the remaining period; entrance fee abolished. The biggest fight was on an amendment that the unemployed benefit for the first thirteen weeks should be 25/- and not 20/- per week. A lurid light was thrown on conditions in some parts of the country by the criticism of some delegates that a 25/- rate would put a premium on unemployment. Another important step was the decision to appoint a full-time clerk to assist the Hon. Secretary, owing to the centralisation of book-keeping under the Insurance Act.

By July, 1912, there was an "Insurance rush," and the President and the General Secretary, with voluntary helpers had to take off their coats. In order to get the approval of the Commissioners further alterations of rules were required, and a special delegate meeting had to be held to give authority. Rules as altered were in the hands of the Commissioners by July 8 and three days later the certificate of approval was received. New members had been coming in at the rate of 100 a week, and those who had joined the Approved Society numbered 1,800. One day in June the *Westminster Gazette* published a useful note: "The N.U.J. was one of the first societies to ask for approval under the Act. An office has been opened by the Central London branch at 146, Fleet Street, where the fullest information is available regarding benefits assured to working journalists under the Act. Ninepence per week paid to the N.U.J. secures protection for existing rights and customs, combination for improving conditions and raising status, legal advice and defence on professional matters, the use of a well-organised Employment Bureau, unemployed pay for six months, substantial grants from a benevolent fund in cases of urgent need, and other benefits." There seemed to be the right man in the right place on the old *W.G.*

Appointed clerk at Union headquarters in October, 1912, J. Gladwin remained to complete ten years loyal and efficient service. In 1922 he left to start in business for himself. He contributes the following note on the launching of the Approved Society in 1912:

The National Health Insurance Act was then in operation, but up to the time of my appointment nothing had been done except that the Executive had secured registration as an Approved Society. The setting up of the Society's organisation was done by various forms, card indexes, registers, etc., prescribed by the Ministry. This entailed a great amount of routine work as each person who came within the provisions of the

Act had to be communicated with. The method adopted to ascertain who were insurable, was the sending of batches of forms to Branch secretaries who in turn passed them on to members and they returned them direct to headquarters. The first count showed a membership of between 700 and 800. It was not very long, however, before numerous members ceased to be eligible as they were earning above the figure specified in the Act for compulsory insurance. Details relative to each member had to be tabulated on index cards and a contribution card for each member had to be issued. Insurance Committees all over the country had to be supplied with lists of members to enable them to issue medical cards when the qualifying number of contributions had been paid. There were numerous records to be kept to enable the Society to obtain funds from the Ministry to pay working expenses. It did not cost the Union anything for clerical or management expenses. The formation entailed a great amount of hard work, tedious reading of official pamphlets, circulars etc., and extra long hours. For months, until the definite establishment, the Hon. General Secretary, along with Holliday, Harrop, Cawthorne and Crimes would spend hours nightly addressing envelopes, etc., working against time to get as far as possible everything in ship-shape order for the December, when the first half year of the operation of the Act would be complete and returns and statistics had to be prepared for the Ministry. All this took place at the residence of the Secretary, which was then in the Blackley district of Manchester. The Secretary's two daughters and eldest son took a pride in giving a helping hand, and Mrs. Watts helped on the tedious work with her ever smiling face and never a grumble at her husband's endless duties. I think it was about June, 1913, that the Executive decided to take offices in the City where it would be more convenient to store the ever-growing accumulation of records, etc. Premises were taken at 1, Strutt Street, Manchester.

Every morning regularly Watts would appear at 10-30 to look over Union correspondence and prepare it to take home with him for attention. At this time membership of the Union was making steady progress and many were the problems which increased membership brought along. Watts worked faithfully to the motto " never leave until tomorrow what can be done today." Records were kept of all complaints respecting conditions of labour, hours, rates of pay, holidays, etc., and particularly where editors had a consistent habit of taking copy from non-journalists. Shortly after going to the Strutt Street offices it was decided to relieve G. H. Lethem, the treasurer, from the duty of keeping records, paying benefits and receiving branch monthly returns. This work was taken on by myself and a system adopted whereby branches gave monthly returns of income and expenditure and rise or fall in membership. Branches were allowed to retain 10 per cent. of monthly contributions for management expenses. In numerous instances where these deductions had accumulated branches would send them along to be added to the general funds. Unemployment benefit was also paid weekly on the recommendation of branch secretaries on a prescribed form. A check was kept on these payments by a system of card index. About this time Miss Louie Watts was appointed as shorthand-typist. A frequent caller at the office was the late George Leach, Standing Counsel to the Union,

a man of charming personality. Another regular caller was Mr. Meakin, who took upon himself the task of compiling a wages schedule and organising the Unemployment Bureau. Apart from sending out circulars and notification of vacancies he kept his own records and reported results to the Executive.

Journalists have the reputation of being unmethodical and unbusinesslike, and the reaction of some to the Insurance machinery at the start confirms it. There was a pathetic appeal to insured members in the *Journal* of January, 1913, to conform to requirements as to the return of cards and books at the quarter's end. These irregularities, "arising mainly through the 'slackness' of members rather than ignorance of the demands of the Commissioners," added largely to the expenses of management, and involved the officials in much unnecessary work. A full column of detailed instructions was given. Thirty years have not sufficed to produce any great reformation, for in the year of grace 1942, when as a Trustee I had to sign regular forms of requisition to the Government for cash advances on Insurance account, I heard such questions as these from worried officials: "Why does the average journalist write 'no' to the question 'have you an unemployment insurance book?' when for fifteen months his employer has been deducting tenpence a week from his salary to pay Unemployment Insurance contributions?" I am afraid the question must be referred to a psycho-analyst.

As was feared Clause 47 was not all fair sailing. The Executive had to warn members not to enter into any arrangement with proprietors which might weaken the custom of paying full salaries during illness. Those who failed to repudiate a notification that such payment would not be made would, it was emphasised, "make the life of a pressman more precarious than it was." Some proprietors contemplated paying salaries less 10/- State benefit. Such a step would be inequitable, as the employer contributed only a small proportion of the benefit, and it would be a direct evasion of the clear intention of Clause 47. The Union would support any member resisting such an attack on rights. A definite case soon occurred. A reporter who was ill for a month was offered his wage less the State benefit. On Watts's advice he refused to accept and got a month's notice. A week after refusal he was paid in full but lost his job. This was a plucky act for a married man whose salary was 30/- a week. He was out of work for six months in 1913. The Union gave him unemployment benefit and Watts got him a post on a paper

where he still is. Watts rightly attached great importance to this case, and a year later he was able to quote two County Court decisions on the point, showing that the judges did not regard the Insurance Act as an employers' relief act. Such action by employers was denounced as "particularly mean," and for any journalist to submit to it was unfair to his brother journalists and favoured the mean employer over the just employer. From the administrative point of view much trouble was caused by the fact that some offices came under Clause 47 and some did not. The N.E.C. favoured the universal adoption of the clause, and vindicated Union policy by a vigilant maintenance of principles.

At this point it may be fitting to refer to the formation and fortunes of the Parliamentary Branch of the Union, which rendered conspicuous service when the Insurance Bill was under way. The Branch officers were: F. Piper (*Daily Mail*), chairman; T. H. Parr (Central News), treasurer; J. G. Hartley (*Manchester Courier*, afterwards *The Times*), secretary; V. Harvey (Reuter's), assistant secretary; committee, J. Booth (*East Anglian Times*), J. E. Herbert (*Manchester Guardian*, later *The Times* and then the International Labour Office), H. Jeans (Reuter's), G. E. Leach (*Manchester Guardian*), T. Cox Meech (*Northern Echo*), A. Norman (Central News), and J. Watson (Press Association). In two years the membership doubled; £100 was remitted to headquarters and there were no claims for benefit. Growing in strength the maximum membership was reached in the 1920's, with a total of 116. When the controversy arose about affiliation to the Trades Union Congress the Branch began a backward movement. Twenty members were lost in 1926; by 1932 the total was down to 76, and later to 70. There was a recovery to 80 in 1939; the latest total was 77. Many in the branch had a feeling of reluctance to the Union being drawn into any political disputes through the T.U.C., and were not prepared to have the work of the Union governed by anything but journalistic trade unionism. When, however, a Gallery man might at any time be glad of trade union support, the attitude towards re-affiliation to the T.U.C. (in 1940) was different, and there were only two resignations. This is a contrast to the days when the Union arrived. Some silk hats then survived and the old guard regarded anything novel as rather improper. The Branch was new and a trade union in the Gallery was a portentous innovation. For three years the Branch was banished to a basement for its meetings, on the wrong side of Westminster Bridge. Then it graduated

to the first floor of a " pub," on the right side of the Bridge, and made a daring request for permission to meet in the Gallery premises. This request was refused by the Gallery Committee on the grounds that (1) it was undesirable to create a precedent for meetings unconnected with the life and work of the Gallery; (2) if granted, others could not be refused; (3) the development of such a system would inevitably bring the Gallery into collision with the authorities of the House. The drive to gain permission was directed chiefly by J. E. Herbert, V. Harvey, C. F. Tuckett, George Griffith and William Veitch (later General Treasurer of the Union). After an interval of six months a deputation to the Gallery Committee repeated the request. It was again refused and the Branch returned to its inn. Three and a half years later an annual meeting of the Gallery decided that, subject to the discretion of the Committee, members of the Gallery should be allowed to hold meetings in the Gallery for discussion of " matters in which they are interested." The conclusion came in February, 1917, when " the N.U.J. Parliamentary Branch is given permission to hold meetings in the Gallery." For five years the Branch, though shy of " real trade unionism," had fought a quiet battle for a Union right.

After the T.U.C. set-back new men who favoured a faster rate of progress took the places of those who established the Branch. Among these was W. Dixon, whose partiality for coloured ink helped to attract attention to his Branch notices. Then there was Brooks who would not let any member of the Gallery forget the Widow and Orphan Fund, even when at meals—a shock to some of the greybeards which penetrated to the Gallery Committee itself. The chairmen of the Branch have included T. Cox Meech, Hugh Martin (then *Daily News* sketch writer) and E. E. Hunter, the first Gallery man to become President of the Union. Among the secretaries have been Stanley Robinson, and Arthur H. Baker (now chief of the Parliamentary Staff of *The Times*). The first M.P. to join the Branch was " Jerry " MacVeagh; Lord Strabolgi (Commander Kenworthy) and Leslie Hore Belisha have been members. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald were nominated but their nominations were withdrawn for reasons not on record. The Branch has had as honorary members Sir Alexander Mackintosh, and Percy Evenden (Press Association, retired); associate members, H. Cant (Exchange Telegraph), George Rivers (Exchange Telegraph), W. S. Gate, and J. H. Robertson; life members, W. E. Perks (Central News,

retired), founder member of the Union, and C. Atkins (formerly chief of the Central News Parliamentary staff). Much of the information about the Branch has been given me by V. Harvey, who recently resigned as chief of Reuter's Parliamentary staff and in July, 1942, was honoured by the Press Gallery for his services to the Gallery over a period of thirty-three years. He took up duty as Chief Press Officer of the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

The great advance in the strength and credit of the Union in the year 1912 gave rise to self-congratulation, combined with some wholesome publicity. This was jointly organised on a creditable scale by the National Executive and the Central London branch, and took the shape of a celebration dinner—I believe it was called a " banquet "—at the Hotel Cecil, London, on October 12, 1912, which proved to be remarkable in more senses than one. That there was substantial cause for the rejoicing may be seen from the following membership statistics, showing the increases in the two biggest branches and in the Union total:

	Dec., 1910	Dec., 1911.	Dec. 1912.
Central London	170	243	480
Manchester	272	279	360
Union Total	1,907	2,246	3,338

A company of three hundred assembled under the presidency of J. H. Harley and the chief guest was Mr. Lloyd George (Chancellor of the Exchequer), the hero of the new " social revolution." Other guests included Sir Edward Russell (of the *Liverpool Daily Post*), Sir Harold Harmsworth (afterwards Lord Rothermere), Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., Sir Henry Dalziel, M.P., (later a peer, the old Gallery journalist who acquired the *Pall Mall Gazette*), and Mr. C. W. Bowerman, M.P. (veteran of the L.S.C., and the P. & K.T.F.). One of those invited, but unable to come was Lord Northcliffe, but he sent a message which was the real sensation of the day. It was well-timed; it was a tribute to the Union from the most famous living personality in British journalism, and although the writer quarrelled with the Union on a critical occasion some years later, it holds a permanent place of honour in our annals. The letter is reproduced in facsimile on the two following pages:

The Times. 1785

Dear Sir,

I am sorry that a long standing engagement in Norfolk prevents my accepting your invitation to meet the Chancellor of the Exchequer on October 12th, for, like most of his political opponents and critics, I am a great admirer of Mr. Lloyd George.

And, moreover, as one one who worked for some six years as a reporter, descriptive note, and leader writer for most of the London morning and evening newspapers, I have watched the growth of your much needed society with interest.

In the last twenty years our craft has risen from a humble, haphazard, and badly paid occupation to a regular profession, which must, in the future, offer increasing opportunities to men and women of ability.

It has therefore become all the more necessary that newspaper workers should adopt the methods of other professions, and form a society for mutual protection and encouragement.

The introduction of all manner of time saving machinery within the last few years has made the work less arduous, but more nerve exhausting, and it is incumbent that journalists should unite for the obtaining of longer annual holidays and better pay.

It is my proudest boast that the

The Times. 1785

(2)

changes and competition which I have introduced into English journalism have had the effect of increasing the remuneration of almost every class of newspaper writer, as well as greatly adding to the number of those engaged in journalism.

It is not, in my opinion, wise or politic for newspaper proprietors and journalists to belong to the same institution, and I have been much pleased to notice that there is nothing of the cap-in-hand and beanfeast business about your society.

There are times of course when newspaper proprietors and those who work with them should co-operate to uphold the dignity of the Fourth Estate, as in the recent occasion when the staff of the "Sydney Daily Telegraph" were expelled from the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. It seems to me that a self-respecting society like yours has the opportunity of doing much for its members. Will you permit me to add that I am the more gratified at receiving your invitation because I know your properly independent attitude towards those who own newspapers.

Yours truly
Northcliffe

Horace W. Sanders, Esq. 2nd Oct., 1912.

Horace Sanders, Central London secretary, and chief organiser of the dinner, read the letter, and the reading was punctuated by several bursts of applause. Although it was a complete surprise —one report called it a "bombshell"—that assembly, comprised chiefly of practical working journalists, realised at once its high value as a pronouncement from the greatest of the "seats of the mighty." When he came to speak a little later Mr. Lloyd George showed that he, too, had grasped its significance. "Like Lord Northcliffe," he said, "whose letter I heard with great interest—that stirring letter which made me think that, perhaps, triumphant as he had been in his present sphere, he might have had an equally distinguished career in another—after that stirring, stimulating appeal I am not so sure that I will not make him an offer that he should join me in the land campaign (Laughter). But, like Lord Northcliffe, I also dabbled a little in journalism in my early days. I was rather in the nature of a casual labourer at it (laughter), but I managed to earn an honest if precarious livelihood on the Parliamentary staff of a well-known newspaper." The letter was first-rate propaganda and the Union did not fail to blow the trumpet.

An excitement of another kind though quite a commonplace in the politics of that era, came when the Chancellor rose to speak. The stewards had to eject certain male suffragists who interrupted. Although it happened thirty years ago Sanders has a vivid recollection of this event, and he sends me the following lively sketch of it:

Just as the dinner should begin I received a message stating that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was unavoidably detained and would not be able to come until late, and so we mustn't wait for him. I had arranged for the orchestra in the minstrels' gallery to play "Men of Harlech" as soon as the Chancellor entered. I explained to President Harley and to Lord Rothermere (Sir Harold as he was then) that the Chancellor would be late, and I asked Sir Harold to accompany the President in leading the top table company to dinner. As soon as Sir Harold Harmsworth entered the dining room the eagle-eyed conductor of the band struck up "Men of Harlech," followed by "Land of My Fathers," and, as no one could see, there were cries from some of our excited brethren of "Good Old Lloyd George," believing that he was there. Barely had the company seated itself than a police summons reached me again. I was asked to come to the ante-room at once where I found Lloyd George smiling all over his face and our brother of the Lobby, Valentine Harvey, introduced me, and this time L.G. entered without "Men of Harlech," but getting "Rule Britannia" and only a few cheers because the meal had begun. His late coming was due to threats from suffragettes. The most scrupulous care had been taken with tickets, and much to her indignation, I had to

get an undertaking from our only woman member of the Central London Branch—the only woman present—that she wouldn't commit any act of aggression or disturbance. She was a very nice girl—terse with me for this requirement, but I think she forgave me. Tickets all bore a number, and there was a magnificent cohort of stewards all organised to the minute. At every sprig there were six stewards timed to act at once in their area. When L.G. began speaking a male suffragist electrified the community by standing up and shouting "Why don't you give the women the vote?" Six stewards moved him out with the speed of Libyan tanks, through double doors into the service room, and so "good bye!" Then a second man shouted the feminist war cry, and he was carried out, and then a third. After the third gent had gone happiness and peace, and uninterrupted speech went on. These men got tickets in the name of our members, so that there was collusion. I mention it because that was the only way a vacant chair could be got, by a member not using his ticket himself.

Then suddenly while I was seated at the top table extreme right a man in evening dress who I recognised as a Special Branch man came to me and said: "There is a man sitting in the Press seats opposite the Chancellor who is threatening to shoot him. Will you please deal with this situation at once." As I walked round the huge room to get up the middle aisle a telegram was put in my hand and that gave me an idea for which my whirling mind was searching. As I got to the man, who was seated opposite L.G., only a yard away, Edgar Wallace, who was at the top of an adjoining sprig opposite Sir Harold Harmsworth (who was next to L.G.) said in quick insistent whisper to me: "Quickly Horace; he's got a gun. Look out, man!" I sat down instantly by the side of the man, who turned abruptly to me and moved his hand down towards his breast pocket. I caught hold of it and said, "I wish you would help me. There is a telegram for you, but these red tape hotel officials won't let me bring it to you. Can you come and deal with this manager for me." So saying I levered him up so to speak, and he said "Certainly I will, and soon settle their hash." I remember in the minute all this took seeing the vital intent eyes of the Chancellor; the tense look on Sir Harold's face, the cat-like expression of two detectives behind L.G. There was an intense awareness about L.G., of vitality and readiness for action. As we turned our backs on him and moved down the aisle I could hear top table conversation break out again, as if a cloud of menace had suddenly passed.

When I got out into a lobby I moved near a settee and tripped up the man so that he fell along the big settee and at the same time I slapped his pockets, all in what was later to be the best Edgar Wallace book style of a "Dick." I fell also on him. When I got up a file of a dozen policemen with two sergeants and an inspector lined up behind me and seemed to be waiting. The swell "Dicks" behind L.G. had acted, it seemed. The man rose up and I caught the smell of drink and knew him to be "tight." He said: "(hic) What is the meaning of this outrage, sir?" I said: "You have threatened the life of a Minister of the Crown: have you anything to say about who you are or how you got in here, before I hand you over to the officers." He said: "My dear shir, me threaten life Minister Crown. Why I wouldn't hurt a fly. You see all I said was

this. 'Misser L.G. as a statesman you are a magnificent pillar of the State, but as a financier you don't know the firs' thing about it with your damsilly Schedule A.' And I said: 'you really ought to be careful because don't you realise that if I had a gun I could shoot you and that would be one financier less.'" That is the sense of what he said. I was perturbed as to what to do for the best. Here was this great gathering of the Union and here was a scandal and sensation which would undo all the labour and all the fighting in a moment of time. I knew he was drunk, and therefore harmless, and so I asked for his cloakroom ticket and got a waiter to fetch his clothes. He gave me his card and I glanced at it with surprise, and said, "Think yourself lucky you aren't in a condemned cell. Clear out!" He then walked to the marble staircase and at the turn he leant over the balustrade as he put his top hat on with great solemnity and said. "You will hear from my solicitors in the morning, Sir." (Exit!)

I made my way back to my seat, hardly anyone then knowing about it, a little apprehensive as to whether I had done the right thing; whether—in fact all those perturbations that come in such a dilemma, with the life of a Cabinet Minister possibly threatened. Still he was tight and I knew that he didn't realise what he was talking about and that "least said soonest mended" was the right thing if I could get away with it. I sat down to relax when up came one of the "Dicks" again: he said "The Chancellor wishes to speak to you at once." Up I got with a dry tongue and marched up to L.G. who looked me straight in the eye and snapped: "Well?" I said: "Sir, the man was *not* a journalist. He is the director of a laundry firm and how he got in here I don't know." L.G. began to smile and then looked up and said quizzically "Boozed I suppose?" I said: "Yes, Sir. He was very wet indeed, as a laundryman." "Thank you for what you did" said Sir Harold, who was not a demonstrative man, and surprised me by patting me on the back. I hadn't really done anything except wonder what detectives were for? By the end everyone understood the motives of silence for the honour of the craft and the Union, though the man wasn't one of us. Only one paper told the story, in the London letter, the *Birmingham Post*, and the next day the editor of the *Yorkshire Post* castigated the *B.P.* for publishing the story!

There was a fine spirit of optimism, and indeed of triumph, in the proceedings. The unity of the profession as embodied in the Union, was shown by the presence of men from Manchester, Leeds and Glasgow, and smaller provincial centres, even as far distant as Aberdeen, as well as the solid phalanx from Fleet Street and the spirit was reflected in the speeches. J. O'Donovan, chairman of the Central London branch and a member of the N.E.C., led off on a note of good humour and congratulation. A notable figure in the Street and the customary places of journalistic resort, "Donny," with his huge sombrero, and his rich Irish brogue, was a pillar of strength to the Central

London branch in early days. In his youth in Ireland he had adorned the staff of the famed *Skibbereen Eagle*, and now he was a sub-editor on the *Daily News*, specialising in Parliamentary affairs. Appropriately in his speech he mentioned that the Union had within the walls of Westminster a flourishing branch and that journalists had no better friend in public life than Mr. Lloyd George. For the information of bachelors he mentioned that the Union Approved Society (which had over 2,000 members) gave maternity benefit. The Chancellor made fun by elaborating this. He understood that the Union decided to pay the benefit during the six months waiting period, and that there had been six applications for the benefit already; indeed one of them, he believed, came on the very day after the Act was passed. One incident of the lobbying before the measure went through was disclosed by O'Donovan. When the Chancellor received the Union deputation they had a most delightful ten minutes. On Clause 47 he asked for the word " may " to be changed to " shall." The Chancellor said it would be the same thing but O'Donovan remarked " We prefer it to be 'shall.' " Before midnight that night it was " shall," and O'Donovan plumed himself on the fact that it was the first time on record that he had used the word " shall " correctly. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, in a characteristic and reminiscent speech proposing " The N.U.J.—Our Approved Society," defended the Union against the charge that by its trade unionism it interfered with the progress of men of distinguished ability, and was cheered when he said that no journalist could feel honoured by the fact that two-thirds of the Union membership came under the Insurance Act because of their low incomes. A bit of serious advice came from Sir Edward Russell, who mentioned that he had been in the same position for 52 years. In wishing the Union well he earnestly put it that it was quite as important to secure a standard of excellence as to secure standards of remuneration and comfort; and that it was to the interest of all journalists to see that individual merit received its proper reward.

A *contretemps* due to a Post Office blunder spoiled a nice little publicity plan laid by the organisers well ahead of date. They arranged for the reception at the dinner table of cablegrams from journalists (many of them members of the Union) all over the world. To save expense Sanders besieged the Postmaster General, got a cable address " Function London " for one day only, and was assured that, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be a guest, every attention would be given to it. But

the only telegrams that reached the dinner were from England! Sanders recalls that with great forethought he had given Scottish friends the economical address. This reminds me of a joke that rippled the placid surface of a branch meeting at St. Bride Institute long ago. There was some talk of the Scottish invasion of Fleet Street, and one witty member suggested that the best defence would be to put a trail of poisoned porridge round Euston Station. The credit of this has also been given to H. M. Tomlinson, in a conversation elsewhere. Indignant at the Post Office failure Sanders rang them up, but no one knew or cared or could do anything about it; and in any case it was after the hours for dealing with such things. Formal complaint was made afterwards and produced a document now on my desk,—a letter from the G.P.O., London, dated November 8, 1912, and signed in a familiar neat hand "A. B. Walkley." He was, of course, in his unofficial hours, the distinguished dramatic critic, first of the *Star* (at the time when G. B. Shaw wrote on music in that paper) and afterwards for many years of *The Times*. The letter explained that by the oversight of a telegraphist, the telegraphic address "Function London" was not entered in the book of the Central Telegraph Office on October 12, and as a result the telegrams bearing the address on that date were treated as undeliverable and the senders were advised accordingly. The arrival of so large a number of telegrams so addressed should have prompted the officers to make further enquiries and proper notice had been taken of their want of care in that respect. The P.M.G. greatly regretted the unfortunate occurrence and the officer responsible for omitting to record the address had been properly dealt with. The letter did not reveal whether this was another exit!

It may be of interest to record the list of dinner officials:—Hon. Sec., Horace Sanders; Hon. Assistant Sec., P. E. Canning Baily; Hon. Press Secretary, D. C. Christian; Hon. Entertainment Secretary, J. Haworth; Stewards: J. Oddy, Randall Charlton, Edgar Wallace, V. Harvey, H. Herbert, S. G. Smeed, P. Macer-Wright, E. L. Goodman, T. Foster, F. J. Mansfield, J. P. Heyes, A. W. Arnold, H. E. Phillips, E. Chattaway, Glyn Jones, J. E. Brown. The solitary lady member at the dinner was Edith Shackleton Heald, who later became chairman of the Central London Branch. A four-page dinner "special" was printed, which attained the high level of wit and humour characteristic of many similar sheets which have cast their radiance on innumerable Union celebrations all over the country. Its title read:

The smallest circulation in the world.

THE NUJJERS' GLOAT.

"I always like to treat you reporters as if you were gentlemen."
—*Punch's Mayor.*

For one night only. London, October 12th, 1912. Price 9d. for 4d. (no change out of a shilling.)

It contained a full page cartoon of Mr. Lloyd George by Arthur Moreland and portraits of President Harley and "General" Watts. The leader entitled "A sad state of affairs," was written by Edgar Wallace and was a lament over the dearth of interesting crime, followed by a letter from Sweeny Tod & Co., threatening a writ for libel. The article threw out the suggestion that the journalists of England "should band themselves together in secret societies to create murder mysteries of diabolical ingenuity." For the sake of publicity "why not begin with a highly-placed victim—may we say a Cabinet Minister? May we go farther and say——." Sanders, with no inkling of the sensational incident he was to figure in, cut the last sentence himself and left it in the air with the two-em rule. The words blue-pencilled were: "would Mr. Lloyd George kindly step down in the cellars for a few minutes and meet our Mr. S——, who will carry out his duties with pleasure and despatch."

An illustrated account of the dinner was given by "our bright and breezy contemporary" the *Press Club Bulletin.* The main feature was a fine flash-light photograph of the company, and it is interesting to pick out the faces of old friends, many of whom happily still survive to recall that memorable occasion. Mr. Lloyd George appears as a man in his prime, still on the right side of fifty, and many another then in the freshness of youth has lived to give valiant service to the cause we then met to acclaim. About the Bulletin's report of "The N.U.J. banquet," there was that note of refreshing candour and badinage always assumed by journalists when talking or writing about, or among, themselves. "Never in history, probably," it was said, "have so many working journalists of all shades and temperatures of political opinion gathered together from every part of the United Kingdom, and sat down in amity at one festal board. It was a great gathering and if the National Union of Journalists needed any vindication, that evening accomplished it. Never before has the solidarity of the journalists of this country been demonstrated in so emphatic a manner. We forbear, charitably, to detail most of the speeches, for after-dinner speeches, save those of the greatest

speaker, seldom bear serving up in after-days. As well seek to decant champagne for future use." O'Donovan's speech, they said, "was not clearly heard in the further corner of the room, and some expressions of impatience were heard, which the speaker wisely ignored"; Mr. Lloyd George "was not at his best"; T. P. O'Connor's speech "spoke" much better than it read; the chairman's speech "was more conspicuous for its obvious sincerity than for its oratorical qualities, which was perhaps quite as it should be." "Music and song," concluded the report, "brought the evening to a close except for the score or two who proceeded to the Press Club, where London and Leeds, and Manchester and Glasgow hobnobbed together to their mutual advantage until night wore on to morning and St. Paul's was beginning to emerge ghostly from the paling sky. And so to bed."

Taking the country as a whole the celebration had a "good press." This it certainly merited, both for its news value, and for its importance to journalism itself. One exception was the *Daily Express*, which of course gave Mr. Lloyd George's speech among the big news, but at the bottom of a column had a miserable and misleading little paragraph stating: "The National Union of Journalists is an organisation founded principally to protect reporters on small provincial papers, who do not receive very large salaries." While true, as far as it went, it was a travesty of the whole truth, as the paper was destined to discover when the Union got to work in Fleet Street. In some "reflections over the Cecilian coffee," Richardson as editor of our *Journal*, said that Northcliffe's letter would do the Union a great deal of good, though it was a pity that some men needed "a stimulus from outside, an inspiration from the most high, before they can be convinced that two and two make four, or what is equally obvious, that the bad conditions which prevailed in the past when newspaper competition was less keen, will not be changed except by the combined action of the chief sufferers, and those who in some measure suffer with them." Betterment could only come from the force of the men themselves, "and if Lord Northcliffe, by his letter, has made that fact clear to those who have doubted, he will have done a considerable service to the Union, to journalism, and to the public." This was really Manchester's way of pointing the moral and adorning the tale of London's master stroke. An excellent tribute was paid by the *South Wales Daily News* in a leader: "Newspaper proprietors, like other enlightened employers, now recognise that it is in the highest sense to their advantage that employees should protect their own interests and establish their

rights, and thereby maintain their self-respect and efficiency. This is what the National Union of Journalists is doing, and although it has been in existence only a few years, it has already rendered signal service to its members and the profession generally."

In London, and indeed all through the Union, the upward surge of membership, and the tonic of the Northcliffe letter, had a buoyant effect. It was good to note from the report of O'Donovan, as the Executive member for the London district, that while the Insurance Act had an undoubted influence as a recruiting agency, the majority of the new members in Fleet Street were outside the scope of that measure. Some who had thought the Union was not quite professional, and many who had been "sitting on the fence," made their plunge into trade unionism under the influence of that surprising declaration by our journalist peer from Printing House Square. The Union Executive felt the urge to attack its main problem, and did a good day's work at a meeting in Glasgow in December, 1912. On the proposal of J. E. Brown a special committee was set up to investigate salaries, hours of work and linage. Watts being already overworked, the "Bishop" was made secretary, and it was not long before vigour and method gathered a mass of facts which warranted all the indignation and reforming zeal which animated Union stalwarts. The Executive marked the occasion by a smoking concert notable even in the social history of the Glasgow branch. It produced a poet in the person of R. F. Morrison, a member of the branch who was the author of Lauder's famous song, "A Wee Doch and Doris." He composed and recited some verses in praise of the N.U.J., of which the following may be recorded:

If you're doomed to sit and scribble
With a pencil and a pad,
While you hold high aspirations
As a literary lad;
On imagination's aeroplane
You can safely soar away
If you hold your pilot's ticket
From the N.U.J.

Spread the gospel of the Union
When you meet with other scribes;
Show them how to face the future,
And you'll silence all their jibes;
For the note is combination
If you want to raise your pay,
And you'll find a handy lever
In the N.U.J.

These sentiments had found practical proof in a certain office in Glasgow just about then. There was a grievance of long standing and the members of the Union told the management that they were no longer a mere handful of individuals, but a body of determined men sustained by the knowledge that the Union Executive was with them. The result was that the staff got reduced hours, better office accommodation and increases of salary.

When the A.D.M. assembled at Manchester at Easter, 1913, the Approved Society was in good working order and the Union could clearly assess its gains. Harley, now at the end of his two years' presidency, amid the felicitations of all on his excellent work in the Insurance developments, warned the Union in its "noonday of success" not to lose its sense of mission, which was to redress the wrongs of journalists and not to become merely a respectable friendly society. He condemned proprietors for equivocal action in respect to Clause 47 and hoped that proprietors' federations would introduce a uniform system. In his financial review Lethem said that they had paid £49 under their guarantee to put members into immediate benefit in the Approved Society, and £20 had been paid in Insurance benefits. It proved possible through Insurance financial arrangements to relieve the administrative cost of the Union. The annual report of the Executive, for 1912, opened thus: "The E.C. record with pride that the year has been the most important and eventful in the history of the Union. The membership has gone up by leaps and bounds, and great progress has been made in dealing with the undesirable conditions under which, in many cases, journalists work and move. The Union has now become the recognised representative body of the working journalist." The last sentence, read literally, was somewhat in advance of hard fact. "Recognition" by the people who really mattered, the proprietors, had yet to be won.

The original Act covered both health and unemployment insurance, but they have never been combined in administration, and in 1918 they were separated in legislation. At first the income limit of non-manual workers in health insurance was £160; in 1918 this was raised to £250, and in 1942 to £420. "Income limit," the term in popular use, is not legally accurate. The limit total applies to earnings in insurable employment, and any other income is not counted. As an illustration, one member of the N.U.J. had a private fortune yielding him about £600 a year, but the amount of his earnings on a provincial weekly was of

course very much less, and it was only this which could be calculated for insurance purposes. The whole subject of State insurance is immensely complicated, and is only fully understood by experts. The Acts regulating it, passed from 1912 to 1941, number 25, and the current statutory Rules and Orders issued exceed in volume the Acts still in force. Pensions have been brought within the range of State insurance. The dubiety with which the first scheme was received by many journalists persisted, and in 1918, when the limit was raised, it was announced that probably many Union members within that limit would apply for exemption "as compulsory insurance is not popular with pressmen." By 1941, when revision was again in the air, a change of attitude was observable, in harmony with the re-orientation of public opinion on the social economy. The A.D.M. of that year decided to urge the Government to make health insurance compulsory upon all workers earning up to £420 per annum, "on the same lines as unemployment insurance." In preparation for the New Act, embodying this new limit, which came into force at the beginning of 1942, a campaign to secure a big addition to the membership of the N.U.J. Approved Society was conducted in the *Journalist* by H. S. Toynbee, our expert in this subject at the Head Office. His well-directed appeals, however, did not bring the immediate response that they deserved. Journalists are notoriously hard to move by appeals, even where their own pockets are concerned. Just as the young journalist, who was asked at a Salvation Army meeting about the state of his own soul, thought it sufficient to gain immunity by the simple reply that he was a reporter, so perhaps those who understand the art of propaganda because they have to exercise it upon the public, feel that its blandishments are not for them. The net result of the campaign was less than half the expected total.

It had been estimated by D. M. Elliot (President 1942) that about one half of the Union's members would be affected by the raising of the earnings limit for non-manual workers under the new Health and Pensions scheme to £420. Of course members on the London minimum, and higher-paid members in provincial centres, were beyond it, but the bulk of the better-paid weekly paper men, and the mass in the cities, would come within it. In Edinburgh, for instance, about two-thirds of Union members would become compulsory contributors. There was the attraction of the "additional benefits" offered by the N.U.J. Approved Society, which were among the best given by any such

societies. For example a sick member got 31/- a week, compared with a State benefit of 18/-; disablement, 17/- against 10/6, maternity, £4 instead of £2. Despite all this there were said to be "many eligible journalists who were passively suffering a deduction of 1/- per week from their salaries, without troubling to fill up the forms which will secure for their shilings a higher return than they can get elsewhere." One reason why the influx of new members to the Approved Society under the 1941 Act was so much smaller than was expected was a development which, while it reduced the Approved Society total, meant gain to the Union membership at large. A new War Agreement conceding a modest salary increase sent the bulk of the higher-paid provincial men just over the £420 limit. H. S. Toynbee sends me the following memorandum which gives a little picture of insurance development and the position in 1942:

National Health Insurance began on July 15, 1912, and with it began the N.U.J. Approved Society, which is therefore 30 years old this year. Health Insurance has made steady progress. The original 4d. (plus 3d. from the employer) has grown to 5½d. (plus 5½d. from the employer). The original 10/- sickness benefit has grown to 18/-. The 30/- maternity benefit has become £2. The millions of insured persons have increased with an increasing working population, and a new class, the juvenile, entitled only to medical benefit, has been created. The Approved Society has been going up and down at the same time—benefits up, membership down. During the Great War membership declined to 1,200. After the Munro Award and the 1921 agreements put five out of seven Union minimum rates above £250 a year, nearly 700 went out in two years. Most of the journalists who ceased to be compulsorily insured neglected to become voluntary contributors. By 1925 the membership was 476. Pensions insurance gave the lapsed members another chance in 1926. Two hundred took it; but not until 1932 did we total 700. Additional benefits soared. In 1922 we were adding 5/- to the statutory 15/- sickness benefit, and 10/- to the £2 maternity benefit; but we were offering no treatment benefits. In 1925 we put another 2/- on sickness and another 10/- on maternity, and began to give dental, optical, hospital, convalescent, surgical appliance and distress benefits. Five years later, we reached the limit; we doubled the statutory cash benefits, and added allowances during convalescence and nursing to our treatments list. Those exceptional benefits remained for ten years. We owed them to exceptional luck. While, in the aftermath of war, other trade union approved societies were losing 20% to 50% of their contribution income through unemployment (miners, steel-workers and shipbuilders for instance) unemployment among our Approved Society members has never exceeded, and rarely reached, 5%. Moreover the majority of our members get salary during sickness. Social security brought us wealth, wealth brought health, and health brought more wealth. The effect was heightened by the loss of members. Every two who lapsed left only

one to spend the funds accumulated by three. That factor is now ceasing to operate. In 1940, we had to reduce our cash additions by 2s. a week (which left them higher than in any other society I know); but we still manage to pay full cost of dental and optical treatment and to provide hospital, convalescent, surgical and distress benefits.

The present war began by abolishing an important source of membership. For years at least half our new members have come by transfer from other societies. An Emergency Act of September, 1939, ordered members of approved societies to stay put. We shall not repeat the decline of the 'teens. Perhaps we are wider awake to the possibilities. To every Union member known to be in the Forces we have sent an invitation to join us. They may need us when they return. Wives and daughters have discovered us, too. A few years ago we had a dozen women members; now we have two hundred. At the end of 1941 our total membership was 1,337. The new Act, bringing into insurance non-manual workers with salaries between £250 and £420 a year, has brought the figure up to 2,000.

A word in conclusion about the relation of the Union to the unemployment section of national insurance. The subject is too technical for any detail. The original National Insurance Act of 1911 prescribed the employment exchange as the place at which unemployment benefit should be paid and unemployment should be proved; but it provided that an association of employed persons might make an arrangement under which the association should pay to its members the State unemployment benefit which they would otherwise get from the exchange. One of the conditions is that the association's rules must provide for the payment of benefit to its unemployed members from its own private funds and another that the association must have effective machinery for ascertaining wages and conditions and notifying vacancies. The N.U.J. has this "arrangement." In big unions there are local offices at which an unemployment register can be signed. We cannot do that, so our members must go to the "local office" or employment exchange of the Ministry to prove unemployment. in virtue of the arrangement they sign on twice a week. In all cases (even where a union has a local office) the claimant must lodge his "unemployment book" and sign on at the Ministry's local office, to initiate a claim. Toynbee adds: "Our rules prescribed a payment of 10d. a day to any Union member not eligible for Union benefit who elects to receive his State benefit through the Union. Tenpence a day is more than is prescribed by the 1935 Act. It was the 'men aged 21 or over' rate prescribed earlier. When the rates were reduced I mentioned the matter to H. M. Richardson, whose characteristic response was: 'Well if anybody wants to knock a couple of bob off the

unemployed he'll have to ask A.D.M. to do it. I 'm not going to.' So it remained. I have no idea how much that rule has cost us. While a member is getting Union unemployment benefit it does not operate, nor while he is getting a Benevolent or S.U.F. grant, after exhausting Union unemployment benefit."

CHAPTER X.

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES: SET-BACK OF TWO GREAT WARS.

SEVEN years have passed—years of sustained preaching and organisation, and of steady progress—and now the Union steps up to the level of the National Plan appropriate to its title and constitution. But, by the irony of fate, before the new policy can take practical shape the disaster of war sweeps over the country and destroys for an unknown time all this promise of a new era for improved conditions which glows in the heart of every delegate to the inspiring A.D.M. at Liverpool at Easter, 1914. In twenty-five years this experience was to be repeated.

The process of development to the "National" stage must be traced from the Acorn start in 1907. At the foundation conference the first motion discussed, after the resolution bringing the Union into existence, was that proposed by Allison (Portsmouth), and seconded by Brown (Croydon) calling for the establishment of a Labour Bureau, and the compilation of statistics of the rates of pay prevailing in all districts. It was also resolved that inquiry be made into fixing a basis for a minimum wage. The Executive was asked "to consider and report" on the whole subject—rather a large draft, seeing that the rules were yet to be approved by the Registrar General, until when the Union would have no real existence. In November of that year branches became restive about Sunday work and the Executive had to reply that they would like to receive the views of the members generally. It is not surprising that the minutes of the Executive for the year 1907-8 record no action on the questions referred. In its report to the 1908 A.D.M. the Executive said that an ample field for the operations of the Union had been disclosed, but confessed: "when we come to consider the question of salaries it will be recognised that although it is impossible to set up anything like a regular

standard, it ought not to be beyond the bounds of possibility to bring about an improvement as regards many matters, particularly in some of the small towns where the conditions of employment ought to receive attention." Something like a national standard was suggested in a six-day working week. Many men were required to work seven days a week, and one man had not had a single day's respite for four and a half consecutive months! Some branches had made representations to proprietors, with " highly satisfactory results." The A.D.M. recommended the Executive to claim at least one day's rest in seven. Woolwich jumped into the arena with a motion that " no member of the Union should offer his services on the reporting staff of any paper at a salary of less than 30/- per week." President Spencer wisely counselled caution in fixing a figure and drafted a resolution condemning the payment of many journalists as " so low as to be unfair," declaring " that the lower standards ought to be increased," and asking the Executive to consider and report to the next conference. This was agreed to, and the Executive was further asked to obtain from branches a census of journalists of all grades, with a return as to rates of pay, such returns to be issued to branches for the information of members.

A neat foreword to the 1908 A.D.M. had been furnished by the Executive in a little booklet on the " aims and advantages " of the Union. It was clearly intended to remove prejudices against the trade union idea, but it spoke plainly of " amazing conditions " imposed on men working in " sweating dens " which were a menace to the proprietors of " enlightened " offices. By March, 1909, Meakin reported on wages and conditions. So heavy did the work become that it was decided to hold a meeting of the full Executive every three weeks. Before this a sub-committee, as it was then called, had been at work in the intervals. At that time the Executive consisted of only nine members, apart from ex-officios. The concluding passage of the annual report submitted to the London A.D.M. 1909, contained a note of both challenge and appeal, which the N.E.C. were fully justified in sounding:

The National Union has only begun its work. There is much yet to be done. The organisation must be extended so as to embrace every corner of the British Isles where a newspaper is published; the benefit scheme must be further developed; the machinery for finding employment for unemployed members must be perfected, and the spirit of comradeship—now only beginning to assert itself—must be developed. To the members of the Union the National Executive appeals for loyal

ungrudging help in the realisation of these ideals; to non-members they extend a hearty invitation to come in and take part in a movement which has achieved success and deserves it.

A report on salary conditions was presented to the delegates by " a member of the National Executive "—Meakin, I believe, but there were reasons for the omission of the name from the account in the *Journal*. It gave rise to long and earnest debate. Watts said that the position in many districts was absolutely appalling, and this economic problem was a menace to the profession. Lethem (the President) stated that the N.E.C. would be prepared to take action in any case where opportunities for successful work occurred. The need for a mandate was expressed in the resolution " that the N.E.C. communicate with branches, requesting them to say what steps, if any, they desire the N.E.C. to take with the object of removing grievances arising out of low salaries and bad conditions." and that, in view of the important problems with which the Union was confronted every effort should be made to increase the membership, so that the hands of the N.E.C. might be strengthened in any action that might be undertaken. The N.E.C. was asked to draft a scheme " for the prevention of injustice to subordinate reporters who are called on to do linage without remuneration from senior colleagues," and to urge branches to obtain support for Mr. Price's Weekly Rest Day Bill, which aimed to help all workers in all industries which imposed Sunday work.

Facts ascertained showed that excessively low salaries prevailed alike in rural areas, in the residential and market towns of the South and West, and in the industrial centres of the Midlands and the North. Nor did the evil affect journalists on weekly papers only, for some of the worst cases were to be found on fairly important dailies. A matter for serious attention was the growing tendency in all parts of the country to appoint so many youths as apprentices, that they formed a large proportion of the total staffs employed. The number of men affected by low salaries could be counted by hundreds. These did not expect impossible things, but recognised that until the formative period was passed, and the strength and prestige of the Union were much greater than could possibly be expected at present, it would be futile, and disadvantageous to individual members, to attempt directly to effect an improvement, in the great majority of cases. The Sussex and Surrey branch, where the conditions were very poor, thought the present time inopportune for taking any

practical action and that in certain parts of their area more harm than good would be done by aggressive effort. "As this view is shared by practically all the branches, there is no need to labour the point further. At the same time it should be stated that it is evident from the manner in which the question has been taken up by the branch officials, that they regard it as constituting one of the serious future tasks of the Union."

Branches in North London, Wolverhampton, North Lancashire and parts of the West Riding had no serious cause for complaint. Leicester and Lincoln balanced comfortable working conditions against wages lower than might be wished for. Wages of 25/- and 30/- for competent adult reporters prevailed very generally, with long hours, lack of definite periods of leisure, inadequate expenses scales, and the imposition of non-journalistic duties. The struggle to exist of many papers was a formidable obstacle to improvement. As to excessive boy labour, on a Northern evening paper there were four youths and seven seniors, the latter including the working editor. With regard to a paper in another large Northern town, run for political purposes, and not paying a profit, it was suggested that representations might be made to the directors. It had a staff of a sub-editor at 30/- per week, and a reporter at 22/6 or 25/-, the former a man of 35 and the latter a married man of 28.

Referring to the census of wages in all grades asked for by the 1908 A.D.M. the report revealed the chief obstacle to the attainment of national, or even district, standards of minima. It read: "Some particulars obtained in the inquiry might be used as the nucleus of a register, but they would only indicate the minimum and maximum rates for reporters, sub-editors, etc., in a district, and would afford no guidance to the rates in any specific office. It is clear that the respective rates might vary to a very great degree. Suppose for instance, the minimum and maximum for reporters in a district were shown as 25/- and 40/- respectively, and that a vacancy occurred in the best office, the previous occupant of the post having been paid 40/-, an applicant guided by the register might ask for 30/-, and thus give the proprietor an opportunity of lowering his standard. It would seem that the object of the resolution (of 1908) could only be secured by a register showing the rates in each case, and it would be almost impossible to compile adequate statistics of this kind, for obvious reasons." The last part apparently indicates a difficulty the Union persistently had to contend with, namely the inveterate

objection of the average journalist to divulge his own actual income.

A Sunday work report dealt mainly with South Wales. Swansea reporters were specially interested as their work on Sunday was often nearly as great as on any other day. The editors of the two local evening papers were friendly and the work was reduced by mutual consent. At Cardiff and Newport labour meetings on Sunday were no longer attended by reporters and at the former place men on duty co-operated unofficially to lighten each others' burdens. At Newport a circular to religious and labour leaders had much effect in reducing Sunday work. With railwaymen, it was realised, Sunday meetings were unavoidable. An instance was quoted of a sermon at a church having to be reported at length because the office where the paper was issued did the printing for the church. The sermon was directed to a stricter observance of the Sabbath by abstention from work! At Croydon, where Sunday work was practically unknown a reporter who was asked to take a couple of engagements on that day was paid extra. The report recognised that Sunday work in daily newspaper offices was inevitable, but there should be resistance to its increase and plans for its mitigation. An addendum on "a weekly day of rest" put the point that many things best worth reporting were uttered on Sundays and a serious injury would be done to journalism if by legislation or otherwise Sunday work was prohibited. The Union should fight for a six-day working week. To get people to report their own Sunday meetings would be a bad example for impecunious newspaper proprietors, and by training outsiders to write for the press would introduce a new element of competition with journalists.

On the subject of free lances stress was laid on the difficulty of modifying the constitution of the Union in order to admit them to membership. Tenure and emoluments were infinitely varied, and it did not seem practicable to draft rules to meet all cases with regard to unemployment and benefit. For the present the branches, aided by the N.E.C. must judge each case on its merits. In October, 1909, the N.E.C. resolved that in their opinion it was impossible to draw up any scheme governing linage which would be suitable for universal application. They suggested that branches should endeavour to make an equitable arrangement between seniors and juniors, "the ideal being, in the opinion of the Executive, that the person who does the work should receive the full reward for his labour."

The establishment of the Employment Bureau on a practical basis was the outstanding event of 1909. In January, 1910, the President (Lethem) declared that the main work of the Union was still ahead; "For instance the question of admission to journalism. If that is to be dealt with effectively, either by apprenticeship or examination or both it will be through the Union." The *Journal* of March, 1910, contained one of Haslam's rare incursions, full of plain speech and home thrusts. He told the story of the starting of an evening newspaper as illustrating the necessity of the Union. The capital was provided by trade unionists, collectively and individually. Standard rates of wages were, of course, to be recognised, but in the journalistic department there was no standard and no organisation to enforce a standard. In the event the journalists were the worst paid section of the concern, one being actually on a level with the man who cleaned the cellar. Haslam gave a telling bit of autobiography:

I once got a job as district reporter on a weekly paper. The proprietor in engaging me called me "Sir" and offered me twenty-five shillings a week! He told me, however, that he was opening up a branch office, in which he was putting a compositor. The compositor was twelve months younger than I was. I was supposed to have charge over him. But he was a member of the Typographical Society and his wages had to be—had to be, mind you—35/- per week. I do not think I should have got 35/- a week if I had stopped till doomsday. It was hinted to me that I should appear in the district with a dignified mien, consort with the big-wigs of the place as much as possible—"as much as possible" was a happy touch—and make myself generally popular. I stood all this fairly well—as far as possible. The only time I broke down was when the proprietor told me that he had been a member of the Institute for 20 years, and asked me to join it in order that I might learn how to maintain the true status of a journalist! All this may seem funny to some of you, and when I was not in a mood to laugh at it I was fit to cry. I was then in a rather isolated place. I knew no journalists, except just one or two as badly off as I was. I saw no way out of the poverty-stricken job. I saved and denied myself of books and pleasure that I might buy boots and clothes to keep up a professional respectability. I have known many hard-working journalists in the same plight. I know some to-day. I know they would be prepared to come into any of our large towns for a wage much less than that of an operative cotton spinner in one of our new mills in Lancashire. Yet, a journalist who has been through all this, and still suffers from it, wrote to me a few weeks ago and asked me if I honestly thought there was any necessity for the National Union.

Good sowing this for the harvest of a National Programme, still well ahead. The 1910 A.D.M. showed a tendency towards realism. Lethem from the chair stated: "We are told that

journalistic work cannot be standardised, and therefore there can be no uniformity of payment. The principle is the same for all workers, combination for mutual protection, but methods differ. We can have our own methods. We find editors of weekly papers working for lower wages than the compositors who set their copy, and reporters on daily papers working seven days a week for less money than the linotype operators who work only six. Reasoned representations to proprietors will avail in most cases to secure the redress of grievances. Where such fail other methods must be found and applied." A motion by Manchester directing branch committees to prepare returns of rates of wages for reporters and sub-editors in their districts, and to send opinions as to the steps that might be taken by the N.E.C. in cases of inadequate remuneration, was adopted. Members who so desired could make their returns anonymously, and it was promised that specially-drafted forms would be provided for them, and that results would not be published in a form to render identification of individual figures possible. In September, 1910, appeared a complaint in the *Journal* that the wages inquiry was sagging and the above promise was reiterated, with an appeal to "over cautious and reticent members" to throw fear aside and confess their economic status.

In December following the editor in a "personal" article protested that the time had come for the Union to take a more definitely aggressive line of action. The scandalous conditions revealed must be faced and fought. Had the rank and file the fighting spirit? Were members willing to risk immediate individual benefit for the ultimate good of all? Those who held aloof were "the slaves of appalling indifference, and still more appalling snobbery allied to wilful ignorance." They heard of members unable to attend branch meetings because the railway fare was more than they could spare; "Gentlemen of a profession which is the public's guide, philosopher and friend, cannot meet once a month to discuss their own affairs because they cannot afford a few shillings!" "An Anxious Member" wrote with a vague sense of unquiet, asking what this outburst meant. The article advocated aggressive action, but if the Union was to be a strike organisation, many would leave it. Richardson, in a footnote, recalled that it was his own personal view, but even so "it was not so violent nor so foolhardy as he seems to fear. Not even the editor would dream of advocating a strike save in the last extremity." Haslam wrote in March welcoming the editor's

article as " refreshing and encouraging." He mentioned that he asked a reporter why he didn't join the Union, and the reply was that he could not afford the half-a-crown a month. The man told no lie ; he was married and had children and his wage was 27/6 a week.

At the 1911 A.D.M. the President still had the same tale to tell —wages less than those of compositors in scores, if not hundreds, of offices. He still believed that proprietors in a large majority would admit the fairness of their claims and rectify injustices. To those who called for aggressive action he said : " Remember our movement is young. Up to four years ago many journalists had not considered the possibility of united action for the amelioration of their conditions, and some even yet are only learning that such is really possible." The Conference adopted rules defining the eligibility of free lances for membership, and approved the principle of " linage pools "—a system adopted here and there for the fairer division of linage revenue.

The 1912 A.D.M. on the proposal of South Wales, decided " with a view to the formulation of a National Programme, for the purpose of carrying out the objects of the Union, the N.E.C. be requested to devote their efforts in the coming year to the perfecting of the organisation." That was the definition of the aim, allied to the recognition that the means were not yet adequate to its achievement. Branches were asked to investigate linage and in cases of grievance to apply to the branches, in places where the linage matter was received, to make investigation there. During 1912 the National Programme idea was overshadowed by the State Insurance exigency. By the spring of 1913 the N.E.C. was able to report that under the vigorous guidance of J. E. Brown the inquiry into working conditions throughout the country had made remarkable progress. It was a pleasant surprise to find that complaints about salaries and working conditions were fewer than was anticipated. The prevalent grievance appeared to be in relation to linage, " in which journalists suffer very heavily from the unfair competition of rank outsiders." In a few pressing cases the N.E.C. promised immediate action, but complete returns must come in before any general attempt could be made to deal with the whole question.

At the 1913 A.D.M. Brown gave a preliminary report on the special inquiry to date. The burning question in most of the branch returns was linage. Many complaints were made of the appointment of outsiders as accredited correspondents of news-

papers—election agents, relieving officers, magistrates' clerks, clergymen, jewellers, auctioneers' clerks, commercial travellers, chimney sweeps, newsagents, and officials of football associations. Brown was having a lively time with his correspondence and had to complain, not only of the large percentage of branches that had made no return at all, but also of the failure of secretaries to supply supplementary details asked for on vital points. Although the presidential deliverance showed continued pre-occupation with the Insurance innovation Harley was constrained to say: "The time has come when, bearing in mind the state of the profession, we must seriously consider a forward movement at the critical part of the line." Meanwhile there was a development in the direction of gaining allies, in a vote giving authority to the N.E.C. to inquire into the question of a working arrangement with the compositors' union. The subjects remitted to the N.E.C. included days off in lieu of Bank Holidays, an annual fourteen days holiday for reporters and the one weekly day of rest. South Wales called attention to the "insecurity of tenure of journalistic employment, evidenced in the difficulty experienced in securing re-engagement, owing in part to the operation of an age limit, and in part to the constant excessive recruiting of youths." The N.E.C. agreed to prepare a statement for their own use, and for publication at their discretion, giving all manner of relevant statistics. Northampton branch devised a scheme in 1913 for securing, as far as possible, all linage for journalists. All linage diverted from non-journalists was to be the property of the Branch, whose first object should be to give it to members not holding any linage. A percentage of the proceeds should go to the branch for a fund to purchase linage from members leaving the district or giving it up. Credit for this interesting project was due to J. Purvis. One of the first fruits was the giving of linage to a member by *Lloyd's News* that had formerly been done by a local shoe operative.

As 1913 wore on the Union orchestra was obviously tuning-up for the "symphony" of the coming Easter. In August the N.E.C. announced that the special inquiry into working conditions had brought to light a most extraordinary state of affairs. Wherever possible the Executive was determined to take immediate action for the redress of grievances, and a sub-committee was preparing a scheme for submission to the branches before the 1914 A.D.M., having for its object an increase in salaries, the adjustment of linage, and the securing of more satisfactory condi-

tions in many offices. To this end branches were urged to send in more reports. As to a minimum wage the N.E.C. felt that, as the A.D.M. defeated a proposal in favour of it, it was not within their province to take any action, but they significantly added that branches could move in the matter at the next delegate meeting, and " the membership of the Union has trebled since the A.D.M. last had such a proposal before it." At the same moment Harley in the *Journal* asked " Is the Union asleep? " urged the need of propaganda, and made the point that " we shall probably, in the first place, reach the question of wages by way of regulation of hours and conditions in some kind of a national programme." Live branches keenly followed the special inquiry. Nottingham spoke of " great discontent at the inactivity of the Union " and demanded an Executive lead in the form of a " Complete National Programme." Throughout South Wales strong feeling was expressed in favour of a comprehensive national demand. Central London was pushing on with its inquiry into conditions in Fleet Street. Speaking in November Watts said that the *York Herald* experience, " a long-drawn-out agony," indicated that when the Union attacked working conditions they would be in for a very hard fight. He hoped that events at York would convince the whole of the branches of the wisdom of some connection with the organised trade union movement through the T.U.C.

An important stage of development came in January, 1914, when the *Journal* contained " Mr. Meakin's minimum wage scheme." The Manchester branch adopted the scheme unanimously on the motion of its author, seconded by J. V. Radcliffe (*Manchester Guardian*, later Labour correspondent of *The Times*). In brief the plan was for branches to group newspapers in their areas in three sections; (1) dailies, (2) important county and town weeklies, (3) small weeklies; and then to classify " general conditions " under these heads: (1) population of town or district covered by the paper; (2) number of journalistic staff employed; (3) circulation, if obtainable, and failing that the general character and position of a paper. The Branch special committee should then decide if a series of standard minimum wages could be applied to each group of papers. If it was found impossible to treat them in groups, then each office should be dealt with individually. Then it should be decided what was the lowest salary that ought to be paid in each office, or group of offices, for senior and junior sub-editors and senior and junior reporters. The factors to be considered here were the class of

work, cost of living and rents, the position men were expected to maintain in public life, the standard rates of the linotype operators and compositors in the same offices, the average pay of skilled artisans in the district and the standard of pay in the model office or offices in the district. Only the rates in the model offices should be considered and no account should be taken of linage earnings, because Union policy was to get an adequate wage for each staff man from his own paper, apart from any additional revenue from extra work. Branch committees also might express opinions on how long an apprentice should be employed before he was entitled to rank as a junior, and after what period junior sub-editors and reporters should take rank as seniors for the purpose of the minimum wage.

The N.E.C. should bring the different districts as near to uniformity as might seem desirable or possible, and then would be able to go to the employers with clearly-defined proposals, backed up by local knowledge and opinion. They could invite all the proprietors in a district to a conference, at which the Union's case could be discussed in all its bearings. Subsequent action would have to be considered in the light of the employers' reply. Working conditions should be considered by branch committees, but as the difficulty of fixing definite standards was far greater than in the case of wages, it might be better for recommendations to be made concerning specific offices, and for negotiations to be carried on by the Executive with individual employers.

In his arguments for the scheme thus defined, Meakin emphasised the need of fair, reasonable and careful proposals, so that one employer should not be able to say the Union was asking more of him than of his rival. Invitations to conference would prove the Union's friendly spirit. It would be a serious effort to get at the minds of employers. The movement could be carried on gradually, first where improvement was most needed and where success seemed most likely. The suggested scale of minimum standards would be very different from a crude single minimum. The fixing of standards in some way or other was absolutely necessary if the Union was to take any action at all to improve wages. "While journalistic ability and work vary so greatly the argument that the minimum will become the maximum is surely not sound. It is not possible to impose on a daily newspaper reporting or subbing staff the same kind of uniformity which can exist in any mechanical industry, while on many weekly

papers, where the staff numbers only one or two, the minimum is at present virtually the maximum. The interests of the most capable and better paid journalists would be strengthened rather than imperilled by raising the standard lower down the scale, as the competition of poorly paid men for the better paid posts at under-cutting rates would tend to diminish." Finally, Meakin pointed out that the investigation he proposed did not involve disclosure by individuals of their office earnings and other income —a requirement which was held to be partly responsible for the unsatisfactory result of one or two previous inquiries.

Cheek by jowl with this article in the *Journal* was a criticism of it by J. E. Brown. He was convinced that such a scheme would fail. First all the branches would not do what was wanted, and secondly, linage could not be ignored, as proposed, though he agreed it should be. Staff men with good linage would not risk loss by agitating for increased wages. Nor was it likely that proprietors at a round table would accept the principle of ignoring linage earnings. Even assuming that minimum standards were set up, the Union was not strong enough to enforce them, as shown by their expensive experience at York. But the Union could do a great deal in the levelling up of wages. The Warrington, Widnes and Runcorn branch represented that Meakin's scheme was too complicated, and as the " simplest possible foundation " they took the fully qualified reporter as the basis of the wage demand, and the idea that he should be paid a wage not less than the average earning of linotype operators in the same office. That secured, the wages of other grades could be standardised at a later stage. If their simple plan could not be adopted the Branch " earnestly asked to be left to work out their own salvation." Nottingham, on the contrary, sent to all branches its appeal for a full National Programme.

The student of Union evolution is struck by the timidity of those days, when local men were nervous about their own security and livelihood, and when leaders, anxious to get moving, were at variance among themselves about the best line of action to take. The contrast between now and then was forcibly put by J. H. Aitken in the *Journalist* of February, 1928, where he reasoned with younger members who failed to realise how much the Union had done in a very few years. He confessed to a shock on finding among some old papers the salary scales which the Glasgow branch in all sincerity suggested as reasonable when the National Programme was in process of incubation in 1913-14. For the

six morning and evening papers in Glasgow the minima suggested ranged from £3 10s. 0d. weekly for senior sub-editors down to £2 for junior reporters. Three of those papers claimed National status. To-day (*i.e.*, 1928) the minimum secured by the Union for all six papers was £5 15s. 0d., and actual office minima obtained by local Union action ranged up to £7 7s. 0d. per week. But the most amazing part of the "Old Programme," said Aitken, was that for weekly papers in the larger towns in the vicinity of Glasgow the minima should be 35/- per week for seniors and 25/- for juniors. The figure for those papers now was £4 7s. 6d.

If any independent corroboration of the Union's indictment were needed in 1913 it was to be found in an address given at Glasgow in December of that year by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Donald, the President of the Institute of Journalists, who proved more than once his friendly disposition to the Union. He had obtained precise facts to show that reporters and sub-editors were "miserably paid" in many towns throughout the country. It was not creditable to journalists or employers, he protested, that reporters who wrote the copy should be paid less, as they often were, than the compositors who put it into type. In a town of 120,000 people experienced reporters received less than 30/- a week; linotype operators on the same papers got 40/- and case hands 32/-. In several towns with populations of nearly 100,000, some senior reporters got 28/- per week, the linotype men getting 45/- and case hands 40/-. In a manufacturing city of about 360,000 people reporters worked on one daily paper at 30/- a week, but the linotype rate was 50/-. Journalism almost came within the sphere of a sweated industry, and it was not encouraging to record that there were plenty of men willing to fill these positions for less money than the present holders received. He had examined hundreds of applications for vacancies and they were melancholy reading. Some showed that the candidates began work when they ought to have been still at school. He mentioned that 2,100 members of the N.U.J. out of a total of 3,600, were insured persons under the new Act, meaning that their income was less than £160 a year, and the membership of the Union, great as it was, did not include a majority of the worse paid reporters on local newspapers. He did not mention the fact that the Union was at that very time getting to grips with the salary and conditions scandal; indeed he professed that he did not think trade unionism would be the solution of the problem. Perhaps it was too much to expect anything else from a President of the

Institute, but I must add that if that body, during its twenty-five years' existence had been led by chiefs who got down to realities as Donald did, it probably would not have failed so abjectly to deal with the economic problem.

Now we reach the memorable A.D.M. of 1914. In February the N.E.C. issued in the *Journal* the full text of a National Programme, so that when the delegates assembled at Liverpool on Good Friday they were fully informed. In the speech with which he closed his year of office as President, a time full of good solid work by a man of sound judgment and outlook, W. T. A. Beare had the privilege of heralding the great project. He spoke of the justice of the claims, and asked the delegates to keep in mind the necessity for regarding rather what was immediately practicable than what they might consider ultimately desirable. The adoption of the Programme was proposed by J. H. Harley, and there followed six hours of keen and critical debate. On the first clause, "to secure adequate remuneration for working journalists of all grades," Central London secured the addition of "whether staff, linage, space-men or free lance writers." Manchester won its fight for the principle that linage earnings should not be considered in fixing rates of salaries. Harley endeavoured to limit wage negotiations with employers to specific cases, and Meakin asked, if that were to be so, what was the good of adopting a National Programme at all? The scheme of negotiation by district was approved. As to apprenticeship the Executive suggested a definite standard, which the conference proceeded to amend in relation to period and proportion, when Foster (Central London, who was elected to the N.E.C. at this conference) suggested re-consideration of the whole subject. This was accepted and branches were left to consider the problem and the Executive to prepare definite proposals. Linage and hours of work led to long discussion and then the whole programme, as modified in certain particulars, went through. As it is a valuable record the main part of its text is here given:

NATIONAL PROGRAMME.

The Executive feel, in view of the state of opinion throughout the Union, that the time has come when a broad national programme should be laid down, and systematic action begun, with a view to carrying it into effect.

SALARIES.—That the Union should undertake a general effort: (*a*) To secure adequate remuneration for working journalists of all grades, whether staff, linage, space men, or free lance writers; (*b*) To establish, so far as opinion and organisation within the branches permit, and with

due regard to variation in local conditions, a series of rates of pay for the various branches of the profession.

CONDITIONS.—That the Union, believing the general reform of working conditions to be urgently needed, should proceed to take the most effective measures available:—(*a*) To prevent, in relation to office staffs, an inequitable proportion of juvenile to adult members; (*b*) To protect working journalists, especially in the matter of linage and local correspondence, from unfair competition from non-journalists—"Journalism for Journalists"; (*c*) To protect working journalists from excessive hours of work, and to secure for them reasonable periods of holiday; (*d*) To secure the inclusion of premises used by journalistic staffs within the scope of the Factory Acts; (*e*) To secure automatic payment for contributions to all papers and magazines within four weeks from the date of commission, acceptance, or publication; (*f*) To ensure the prompt acceptance or return of MSS. and specimens.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

Owing to the complexity of journalistic work, and the wide variations between local conditions, uniform action throughout the Union on all points will not be possible. While the largest measure of common action found to be possible should be taken in all cases, the degree of local urgency will vary considerably. In such circumstances it will be the duty of the branches under the direction of the Executive to select the points of most pressing importance to themselves, and to formulate suggestions for dealing with them.

While the scheme allows for a large measure of local autonomy, it is desirable, especially as regards salary rates, that the standards aimed at should represent the nearest possible approach to uniformity. To secure this it is essential that the Executive should have effective powers of supervision over branch action, so as to correlate within broad limits the policy of all branches.

The Executive are anxious to offer their best advice and assistance in giving effect to these proposals; but as central action must necessarily be guided by branch action, the Executive desire to emphasise the fact that the success of the scheme will depend, in the first degree, on the active initiative and efficient organisation of the various branches.

SUGGESTED PLAN OF PROCEDURE.

SALARIES.—The Committee shall not take into consideration any possibilities of linage earnings. The Executive strongly urge the branches to keep steadily in view the aim of securing for each staff journalist an adequate salary for his own appointment, apart from any additional revenue he may derive from private work.

When the proposals of the branches have been submitted and co-ordinated, the National Executive shall endeavour to arrange negotiations with employers in the various districts with the object of making known to them the proposals of the Union on the salaries question, and securing a general discussion on the subject of wages and conditions. Even where the Union may be unable, for the present, to enforce the rates of pay agreed upon, the advantage of agreement within the branch on such rates will be two-fold:—(1) It will serve as a guide to applicants

for vacancies who are asked to name a rate of salary ; and (2) It will supply a definite basis for discussion between the Union and employers.

With the view of facilitating practical action, the Executive suggest that each branch shall be directed to appoint as early as convenient a special committee of its members, composed, if possible, of a member or members of the staff of each paper in its area. The committee shall suggest, preferably after private consultation with representative Union members on the sub-editorial and reporting staffs, what is the lowest salary that ought to be paid in each office, or group of offices, for senior sub-editors, junior sub-editors, senior reporters and junior reporters [having regard to the factors already suggested in the Meakin scheme dealt with above.]

LINAGE.—Inquiry has shown that journalists suffer considerably from unfair competition from non-journalists. Where such cases are known in the branches, the circumstances should be thoroughly investigated and reported to the Executive. The branches are urged to verify with the greatest care all reports sent in. The Executive shall also consider whether it is possible to establish a clearing house, where "copy" lifted by one paper from another may be traced and charged for. Grievances in the matter of delayed payment for linage and free lance work, and retention of topical matter for undue length of time were also dealt with.

HOURS OF WORK, ETC.—The hours and conditions of work vary so much as between morning, evening, Sunday, and weekly papers ; and again as between reporting and sub-editing staffs, that a fixed table of hours is regarded as extremely difficult of attainment. The Executive, however, think that general agreement should be possible on the principle of at least one day's rest in seven and an annual holiday ; and they suggest that where grievances arise under either head, the local circumstances should be investigated by the branch and suggestions formulated for taking action to remedy them.

THE FACTORY ACTS.—The cases of illness and breakdown disclosed in the Insurance Section suggest that many journalists have to work in unhealthy conditions. The Executive are of opinion that the extension of the Factory Acts to the premises used by the journalistic staff would in many cases require an improvement of the existing office accommodation, and so tend to safeguard the health of the staff.

The programme was largely based on the Manchester scheme and the whole had its factual foundation in the detailed report of the Brown Inquiry Committee, which had handled returns from 72 branches with a membership of nearly 3,000, but did not touch Central London. Brown was a free lance man himself, with early staff experience, and a close knowledge of provincial conditions ; and the addition of Meakin's grasp of principles, skill in negotiation, and first class provincial daily paper experience, made a fine team for the ploughing of this furrow. Harley worked with Brown in the inquiry but he, too, was a free lance. Meakin plumped for the minimum first and carried the day. Following the adoption of the programme at the A.D.M. came a sharp

discussion on a proposal by Surrey that the co-operation of the Institute of Journalists be sought. Brown said they wanted amalgamation if the programme was to be successful. Watts's view was that it would be a monumental piece of folly to approach the Institute. Richardson said it was a question whether the N.U.J. was to be a virile trade union or a Surrey capon. The suggestion was decisively defeated. The N.E.C. proposed to increase the Union contribution and it was agreed to ballot the members on the questions: whether the contribution should be raised from 2/- per month to 2/6 per lunar or per calendar month, or whether there should be an increase at all.

Philip Snowden, M.P., and Mrs. Snowden, were present on the platform on the first day of the A.D.M. by invitation, and Snowden gave his impressions in the *Journal*. He had been a member of the Union for some years but this was his first personal touch with the work, and it was a revelation to him to find the Union so live, vigorous and enthusiastic. The Conference assembled at 9-30 a.m. and on his return to the hotel at 9-0 p.m. the delegates were still in session. He was sure there never was a trade union which took its work so seriously. He really thought that the N.U.J. was the greatest achievement in trade unionism. It had organised one of the most difficult classes of labour—the difficulty of "respectability," the difficulty of isolation and greatest of all the difficulty of variety of grades and pay. But in the most extraordinary way these difficulties had been overcome and the growth of the Union had been phenomenal. He did not think it would be possible for the Union to remain permanently unassociated with the general trade union movement, but it would be a fatal mistake to try to move too quickly. There must first be consolidation and strengthening.

On June 1 the executive sub-committee, specially dealing with the subject, faced one of the heaviest agendas in the history of the Union to date. The branches were taking up the National Programme with such energy that it was thought well to give warning that "speed is of less importance than thoroughness." In July the Executive hoped that by the autumn each branch would have prepared a provisional scheme of procedure for applying the principles of the programme in its own area, but in August all normal activities were submerged by the tide of war. There was no *Journal* from October to February, 1915, and as Richardson put it in his record: "National Programmes were forgotten in the national needs. Many of the brave young spirits

who had argued and 'objected' at the Liverpool meeting, and cheered, laughed and sung at the Liverpool Press Club, were rushing to the recruiting stations." Even in that dark time the torch of Union spirit was kept flaming by such calls as: "Enlist for the fight for better conditions: an appeal to non-members." The President (F. E. Hamer), having recalled the achievements of the Union, said: "There are bigger tasks still to be accomplished, and the National Programme is only in abeyance until the conditions are favourable for its revival."

Looking back at the ordeal through which our Union, and indeed all unions, then passed, it can now be seen that all was not loss. It was during the War that the policy of real national agreements developed. The Liverpool Programme, though called "National," was not to be launched on a national scale. It was intended to take "the largest measure of common action found to be possible," but the areas where existed the greatest need were to be chosen for action. In great industries national executives negotiated agreements with local bodies of employers; hence the varieties of agreements for the same class of labour in different parts of the country.

In the newspaper industry the proprietors were organised in quite a number of bodies. The Newspaper Society, for instance, began with the word "provincial" in its title in the year 1836, with a membership of about twenty. In its centenary year it had a membership of 400, who published about 1,000 daily and weekly papers, of the total of 1,600 in England and Wales. In 1904 the Lancashire Newspaper Society was founded and the formation of the Northern Federation of Newspaper Owners (afterwards the Newspaper Federation, with which the Union came to negotiate) soon followed. In 1906 the London proprietors, who had hitherto associated themselves with the Newspaper Society, founded the Newspaper Proprietors' Association (always now called the N.P.A.) but they did not actually retire from the Newspaper Society until 1916. In 1909 the Federation of Southern Newspaper Owners came into being. Then, as Mr. E. W. Davies, for years the general secretary of the Newspaper Society, remarked in his "Centenary Retrospect," the "disorganisation of newspaper proprietors, resulting from the multiplication of their representative organisations, was complete." An attempt at unity, or rather co-ordination, was made in 1909, when there was a meeting of representatives of the N.P.A., Newspaper Society, Lancashire, Yorkshire and Irish Newspaper Societies, Linotype Users'

Association, Northern and Southern Federations, and the Institute of Journalists! Mr. Davies might well ask in relation to the last named: " What were they doing in this galley? " We in the Union could guess the reason. The result of the conference was the appointment of a Joint Committee to be convened when any matter arose affecting more than one organisation. But the idea never proved workable. When war brought its lessons area organisations were formed where they did not already exist and the major bodies co-operated through the Newspaper Conference set up in London by the N.P.A.

Labour questions dictated concentration. Wage increases necessitated by the rise in the cost of living during the war were settled by area negotiations. One group of the Typographical Association secured an increase and other groups followed; and broadly the wages of other printing operatives followed the same track. The Newspaper Society had to protest that it could not accept agreements it had not helped to make, though (comments Mr. Davies) it had to accept them in the end. During the presidency of Mr. Valentine Knapp (*Surrey Comet*) the Newspaper Society in 1920-21 became the only national organisation of proprietors in England and Wales, by the amalgamation with it of the lesser bodies. The Irish Newspaper Society (daily newspapers) was affiliated, and later a close working arrangement was made with the Scottish Daily Newspaper Society. Thus the N.S. became the one body to speak for the provincial and the London suburban newspapers, and the N.P.A. was the authority for the area compendiously known as " Fleet Street."

To pick up the strands of the Union's national policy, the worsened conditions of war time created strong feeling at the Sheffield A.D.M. in 1915. The delegates numbered only 37, owing to reasons of economy, and the meeting cost £95, compared with £162 in 1914. Central London took the lead on the wages and cost-of-living question. C. P. Robertson proposed that in view of the greatly increased cost of living the N.E.C. should approach the proprietors' organisations calling (*a*) for the restoration of salaries reduced during the war; (*b*) an increase of 30 per cent. on salaries falling within the limits of the Insurance Act. The N.E.C. were to ask the proprietors to receive deputations and, if amicable settlements were not reached, to refer the dispute to the President of the Board of Trade, with a view to the appointment of an arbitrator or court of arbitration, whose decision should be accepted as final. Robertson said that a quarter of the members

within Insurance Act limits had suffered reduction, and in some cases men who had earned 30/- weekly had been deprived of as much as 7/6. Prices had risen 25 to 28 per cent. in the provinces and 30 to 35 per cent. in London. A high person at the Board of Trade to whom he described the sufferings of their men declared: "Good God! who would think the conditions in journalism were like that?" The same person definitely said they must approach the Employers' Federation. Robertson scorned the objection raised by proprietors' bodies in the past that they had no binding authority over their members. They had agreements, which were kept, with the printing and other unions. F. J. Mansfield, in seconding, urged that the most effective way was to go first to the federations; and countered the argument that journalists were not producers like others in industry with whom the Government had made bargains, by contending that in the real sense they were producers, by stimulating recruiting and building up the nation's morale.

The N.E.C. sought to amend Central London's motion by approaching individual proprietors and not federations, and by seeking an increase of 25 instead of 30 per cent. Central London insisted that the approach to a federation must come first, but agreed that individual proprietors might then be dealt with "where necessary." There were divided opinions about a general percentage increase of pay, one point being that it would penalise the proprietors already paying the better rates. Mansfield admitted the difficulty of the fixed percentage and said Central London would not oppose a sliding scale if it could be devised. Meakin moved to leave out the definite figure of increase demanded, but was defeated, and Central London's motion was carried. Here then, at last, the Union committed itself to action on a national scale. A complication of the wages issue was threatened by a resolution, moved for Manchester, asking the N.E.C. to endeavour to secure for all low-paid journalists above the age of 21, a weekly wage at least equal to the district standard rate recognised by the Typographical Association (known as T.A.). Haslam, the proposer, said that an official list of the standard rates paid in the printing trade in about 40 towns showed how those rates exceeded the pay of journalists. Some journalists worked for 20/-, 22/- and 25/- per week, and 30/- was about the lowest in the T.A. branches. He claimed that the resolution did not interfere with the National Programme, but gave it a basis to work on. The motion was carried.

The Executive were now faced by a heavy task, and wits were exercised as to the best way to set about it. Meakin, who was concentrating a clear mind on a complex situation, addressed a long memorandum to his colleagues on the N.E.C. dated July 1, 1915, in order to save time in discussion at an approaching meeting. Having closely studied the inquiry forms returned by the branches and the conditions of the newspaper world at that time, he urged that the first duty was to dispel from the minds of members any idea that they could look on passively and expectantly while the N.E.C. got the reforms desired. That idea was deeply rooted and had a paralysing effect. The only way to alter it was to set the branches to work on their own particular wages problems, by reviving the salaries portion of the National Programme. This was the only scheme elastic enough to meet all the varied conditions, which could co-ordinate effectively the energy of branches and Executive, and which provided for steady progress towards a clearly defined goal. Meakin realised that this meant a departure from the A.D.M. decisions, but the Executive, if it felt unable to carry those decisions out to the letter, was bound to accept the responsibility of the necessary divergence and justify its action to the next A.D.M. It was a very serious step which could only be justified by overwhelming reasons. He was able, however, to adduce a very strong reason in that the A.D.M. "had committed the Executive to three mutually incompatible policies: (1) wages section of the National Programme; (2) the all round 30 per cent. increase proposal; and (3) the Manchester minimum (T.A. standard) resolution." Whichever of these was adopted, the other two must be shelved, or hopeless confusion would result. The National Programme was, he pointed out, adopted with unanimity and enthusiasm by a hundred delegates, but the other two were carried by majority votes in a much smaller meeting. The N.E.C. in all the circumstances might fairly adopt the policy which it thought best.

Meakin's argument against approaching the federations is an illuminating summary of opinion at that time:

> These are the considerations which seem to me to suggest that appeal to the federations would be futile. We are not a completely organised body. We have no flat rate as on the mechanical side, which simplifies organised bargaining. The employers have not the slightest reason to fear a general, or even a district, strike. These conditions always exist in the case of claims by the printers, but we know how the proprietors push resistance to the danger point of a strike. Could we hope for a more favourable response? The great variation in wages actually paid

constitutes an insuperable difficulty. The employers know as well as we do that great inequalities prevail in almost every district, that some proprietors pay much better than others, and they would be able to say, quite reasonably I think, "How can we commit all our members to the same concession, in view of the great variation in the wages paid." We should, I am certain, be told in effect, that we must negotiate with individual employers. Even assuming that the Federation Committee expressed sympathy, we know well from our experience in connection with the Insurance Act, that individual members act as they please, notwithstanding official recommendations. We have no conciliation machinery, and in view of this I think there is little prospect of the Board of Trade interfering, unless a strike were threatened, which would adversely affect the country. This is out of the question.

This general case is, I consider, strengthened by the particular circumstances of the time. Proprietors are seeking to economise in every direction, and owing to the increased cost of paper there is a movement to cut the number of pages. This means less journalistic work, and any forced increase in wages, if it were possible, would probably lead some employers to cut staffs also. In the majority of cases reported upon in our inquiry reduction of staff by enlistment has been accompanied by corresponding decrease in work, so that a margin for further reduction still exists. In discussing the alternative policy I suggest that these three general conditions are essential to any effort to improve salaries in journalism: (1) the increase must be secured primarily through the local activity of the members concerned; (2) the actual negotiations should, except in special circumstances, be initiated by the staffs or branch committees immediately concerned; (3) the concessions obtained are bound to vary widely, just as the existing rates of pay vary widely.

After close consideration of the whole circumstances the Executive unanimously decided that it would be inexpedient to carry out strictly to the letter the A.D.M. resolution, and that in order to deal with the wages question in what appeared to be the most effective and practical way, the branches be requested to take up again the wages section of the National Programme, to formulate proposals as to minimum rates and send them to the General Secretary with a view to submission to employers. The resolution referred to was the Central London one (30 per cent. increase), and the Executive explained that the course adopted was approved by the committee of that branch. Some branches disapproved the Executive action as undemocratic and Nottingham in particular called for the pursuance of the A.D.M. decision. The N.E.C., however, had on its side the logic of events, and was able to report as the months wore on how restorations of reduced wages to former figures, war bonuses and even wage increases were being secured on a growing scale. But it was the forward movement embodied in the National Programme that was the really important

thing, and by January, 1916, the minimum standards suggested by branches had been accepted in two cases, and in others successful action had been taken. The Glasgow A.D.M. at Easter, 1916, congratulated the N.E.C. on its war wage successes and approved its policy on the general movement, while Nottingham withdrew its notified motion of censure. It was decided to urge the branches to complete the preparation of minimum standards and to arrange as far as possible for office rates to be furnished to applicants for posts; also when the schedules were complete, members were to be instructed to refrain from stating salary required in replying to advertisements with box numbers. The N.E.C. were asked to consider the practicability of establishing national and local conciliation boards.

The 1916 delegates were in possession of a detailed report by Meakin on the wages movement running to eight large quarto pages in print. His arguments and conclusions were supported by elaborate tables of statistics, from which he had worked out interesting percentage data. In the wages inquiry only 564 members out of a total of 3,000 sent in the desired information, but the war period had removed much of the previous apathy. An analysis of the returns showed clearly the extraordinary diversity of remuneration and the resulting difficulty of proceeding on the basis of an all-round percentage increase. It enabled them to realise, as probably the majority of members had not before realised, how far the Union was removed from the simplicity of method which could be adopted by a union of men paid on a flat rate. Of the 564 members making returns 454 were reporters and 110 sub-editors; and in the whole there were no fewer than 71 different rates of pay. He thought that a complete analysis for the whole membership would produce a result even more striking. Forty-five per cent. of the 564 had wages between 30/- and 45/-, and 83 per cent. were below 60/-. Of the 100 between 20 and 25 years of age none received more than 60/-, and only 16 got over 35/-. At the bottom of the scale 13 got under 20/-; 11 between 20/- and 25/-; and 40 between 25/- and 30/-.

The only mitigating feature was the existence of one office at least in most districts where salaries were above the average and which could be cited as an example. Anxious consideration had been given to the best method of procedure as between Executive and branches in the approach to employers, and then Watts and Meakin, and others who helped, had to use their best gifts of

persuasion and compromise in their many interviews with the employers. Meakin reported in effective detail on these encounters with the proprietors. It was a masterly survey of the results of an arduous campaign, which taught many lessons for future action. In the South, Brown and Harley took part in the deputation work, and others in the East and West. The temper of all engaged in this real spade work was truly shown in the concluding paragraph of the report: " The policy and procedure which we have adopted involve much detailed work, and time will be needed to carry it out. But we must take our conditions as we find them, prepare ourselves for steady, sustained effort, taking district by district, and covering the ground thoroughly, head office and branches co-operating, undeterred by occasional failures, which are bound to check us sometimes, and making one success a stepping-stone to another." It would be difficult to find a better exposition than that of the will and work of the Union in those early days of constructive and unselfish co-operation.

At the Manchester A.D.M., 1917, Meakin again dealt comprehensively with the past and the future of the wages movements, giving details showing that since the opening of the campaign in 1915 the Union had won concessions of a total annual value of over £7,000. But even so nearly all journalists were in reality worse off than before the war, and the need for a greatly improved standard of pay was more pressing than ever. Haslam bluntly declared that often one man was doing the work of two, owing to reduced staffs, and in such cases he would rather speak of " insults " than " increases."

In the year 1917 Union policy was affected both in impetus and character by important successes. Central London, off its own bat, gained recognition and a vital lead on the minimum issue, from the N.P.A., and the Executive also negotiated an agreement on war bonuses with the Northern Federation. In January, 1919, an agreement was made with the Newspaper Society establishing national minimum scales for the provinces, ranging from £3 to £4 4s. 0d. per week. This met the problem of the infinite diversity of papers by giving a higher weekly minimum in places where a daily paper was published; and in the case of daily papers there three grades based on the populations of the towns. War conditions (chiefly the rise in the cost of living) diminished the value of the new minima, and the Union went to national arbitration. The Munro award at the opening of 1920

gave new rates of minimum ranging from £4 to £5 4s. 0d. Disappointment at this result led to the forming of a new National Programme at the Cardiff A.D.M., 1920. This covered the grading of staffs and the grouping of papers, an increase of pay for juniors and probationers, the period of training, hours and holidays, and "one paper one staff," and the Executive were asked to endeavour to obtain increases in the minimum scales already established. They were not able to gain much when once again they met the Newspaper Society. True they won advances which made the scales range from £4 7s. 6d. to £5 15s., but the proprietors were still adamant on the important question of "conditions," meaning mainly hours and holidays.

As far back as 1914 the regulation of hours and the granting of holidays formed a plank in the National Programme. Years passed and the Newspaper Society rejected all Union appeals. The machinery of P. & K.T.F. affiliation and of conciliation all proved ineffectual to produce anything stronger than a recommendation from the proprietorial body. Then in 1930 something better came. The Union and the N.S. signed a joint memorandum embodying the principle of a five and a half day week, or an eleven-day fortnight, but stating that the application of it should be subject to local accommodation. A joint committee was to "adjust" any alleged departures from the principle. The length of the working day or week was still undefined, and as to holidays there was only the cold comfort of a sentence in the memorandum confirming "the principle that every journalist is entitled to an annual holiday with pay." There the subject was left for years. In fact it is still unsettled, but the Newspaper Society at last (in 1942) agreed that within twelve months of the end of this war they will meet the Union and "conclude an agreement on hours and holidays."

The Union having opened new "National" ground the 1920 delegates were concerned about delimiting national and local action, in the interests of strongly organised districts which felt able to take action themselves. That this difficulty persists was shown as recently as the 1938 A.D.M. when the Executive appealed to branches to maintain stability of policy. "It is impossible," they observed, "to have a National Policy which changes every year." Events in South Wales in the autumn of 1918 were a rather startling proof of the possibilities of a clash between a cautious Executive bent on a national policy and a vigorous branch resolved to fight its own battle. It negotiated its claims to a wage

increase with the local proprietors with a fine spirit of independence. At a critical stage there was the distinct danger of " drastic action " and the brake had to be applied from headquarters. Happily the employers capitulated and the need for a strike vanished.

The last National Programme in my story is that launched by the 1939 A.D.M. at Bristol and it was an enlargement of the programme of the 1935 A.D.M., the main point of which was an increase in the minimum based on an improvement of the lowest paid men, who were then described as " getting only £4 7s. 6d. per week." The argument was that that wage did not allow men to save enough to provide for the day of compulsory retirement. One wonders what happened to the men 20 and 30 years earlier with their wage of 30/- and less! In 1939 a member of the Executive complained that the 1935 programme was still a piece of paper and no point had been achieved. In moving the 1939 programme the General Secretary said the warning already given had to be repeated, that if they were going to make further progress with the Newspaper Society they had to strengthen their organisation and spirit of militancy. To concede the demands would cost the Newspaper Society a lot of money, and the Union must be prepared to show its strength. Members must face the plain issue whether they were prepared to hand in their notices if and when the N.E.C. judged the time ripe. The text of the programme is given here as a yardstick by which to gauge the progress of the Union—1914 and 1939, a memorable quarter of a century. In presenting the document the N.E.C. laid stress on the urgency of the redress of grievances under the existing agreements; and also emphasised the need for an active development of the closed shop movement, " which is an essential weapon in the fight for the realisation of this programme." The Conference adopted the programme as follows:

SENIORS.—Increase in rate for weekly papers to £5; bi-weekly and tri-weekly papers to £5 5s.; weekly papers published in towns with dailies to £5 10s.; daily papers in towns with population under 100,000, to £5 15s.; daily papers in towns of between 100,000 and 250,000 to £6 10s.; daily papers in towns of between 250,000 and 400,000 to £7; daily papers in towns of more than 400,000 to £7 10s.

JUNIORS.—Addition to existing agreement: payment of juniors under 20 years of age as follows:—age 17, 20 per cent. of the senior minimum, 18, 30 per cent., 19, 40 per cent.

JUNIORS—NUMBER EMPLOYED.—Not to exceed ten on any paper (this provision to be added to the existing agreement). Proprietors to under-

take, when apprenticeships are considered, to draw up indentures according to the terms of the agreements.

LONDON OFFICES OF PROVINCIAL PAPERS.—Payment of the London minimum (£9 9s.).

DISTRICT REPORTERS.—Head office rate or district rate, whichever is the higher.

HOURS.—Morning and evening papers—day workers, 5 day week of 45 hours (including meal times); night workers, 5 night week of 37½ hours (including meal times). Weekly paper workers, 48 hour week (including meal times). Sunday to be considered a working day when any work is done on Sunday. District men, 5 day week. No work during meal times.

HOLIDAYS.—Juniors up to 21, two weeks with pay—7 days consecutively between 1st May and 31st October. All over 21, three weeks with pay—14 days consecutively between 1st May and 31st October. Pro rata for new employees. Two days' leave at or near Christmas time and a day off in compensation for every bank holiday worked.

PROVINCIAL LINAGE.—Morning and evening papers, sporting editions, national weeklies and Sunday papers. Up to 60 words a minimum of 2s 6d. for each paragraph used. All matter above 60 words to be paid for at the minimum rate of 2d. per line. Local weekly, bi-weekly and tri-weekly papers. Up to 100 words a minimum of 2s. 6d. The minimum rate for matter in excess of 100 words shall be 1½d. a line. Where a story is ordered by papers covered in clause (1) the correspondent shall receive at least 7s. 6d. for the assignment, exclusive of telegraphic and telephone charges and irrespective of the amount of copy used, but the 7s. 6d. shall be taken into account when copy used exceeds in value 7s. 6d.

LONDON.—The London minimum for all dailies and national weeklies (including financial and sporting papers) and for agencies. Spacemen, two guineas a day, meaning a day of the hours specified in the London agreement. One guinea for an assignment occupying half-a-day. Minimum of 15s. for an assignment occupying less than half-a-day. Spacemen not to number more than 10 per cent. of staff. Spacemen who have been attached to a paper more than six months to receive one month's notice of termination. No casual sub-editors except during sickness or holidays. Higher rates for correspondents of London newspapers and agencies together with the payment of reasonable expenses, sports work to be included.

LONDON SUBURBS.—Minimum of £6 6s. a week for suburban papers, i.e., weekly papers published in the Metropolitan Police area with the addition of Watford.

This was the fair hope of 1939, but the programme, like its predecessor of 1914, was thrown back by war, and the Union once more had to grapple with the urgent problems which war always forces on the workers. So this phase of national policy closes on a discouraging note, though, as will be seen later, better news was in store in 1942. The evolution of strategy rather than

the details of campaigns have here been dealt with. This chapter will fail in its purpose if it does not show something of the patient work of years, the careful planning and the consistent loyalty of voluntary workers struggling for the realisation of an ideal. Although much has yet to be won pioneers who still survive, if if they look back to the days of origin, realise that even what is now in our possession was then but the dimly discerned outline of a far distant Utopia.

CHAPTER XI.

"RECOGNITION" WON: LONDON'S STIMULATING LEAD.

MORE than thirty years ago Union pioneers in the region roughly bounded by Temple Bar and the King Lud got busy, at the behest of their Executive, on an inquiry into "salaries and conditions." Pardon the lapse from "wages," in view of the classic ground on which we now enter. One of the earliest branch documents in my possession is a report on this matter by an investigation committee dated November 14, 1913, Four years before that I first planted a timid and hesitating foot in the Street of Adventure, but had brought with me some "Kentish Fire" in the Union cause, and was encouraged to find an afterglow of the meteoric A.D.M. at Anderton's earlier in that year. A few distinguished journalists had given us their blessing, and trade unionism was beginning to get respectable among a growing band of reformers. In 1910 I was put on the branch committee and was soon in the thick of the inquiry. By 1913 the Branch had 480 members and the officers that year were:

Chairman, F. J. Mansfield (*Standard*); deputy chairman, J. Parker Heyes (*Daily Telegraph*); hon. sec., J. O.Donovan (*Daily News and Leader*), who was also the territorial member of the Executive; assistant hon. secs., D. Davies Shepherd and Cecil Gabbertas (Press Association); hon. financial sec. and treasurer, P. E. Canning Baily (free lance); minute and insurance sec., D. C. Christian (*Liverpool Post and Mercury*, London Office). Committee: Miss Billington, Mrs. Bertram, J. H. Harley, J. Oddy, P. Macer-Wright, T. Foster, W. V. Thornhill, E. Chattaway, A. W. Arnold, H. E. Phillips, J. Haworth, G. Bowman, W. Palmer, E. J. Seale, H. W. Dixey and E. Hall.

The Bohemian tradition survived strongly in the Fleet-Street of that day, and it was not too easy to find a core of serious-minded men who would devote the energy and time demanded by the

significant business then in hand. Nevertheless, it was done, and the necessary research was undertaken by a dedicated band, who felt in their bones that this was a constructive task pregnant with big possibilities. They did not foresee the economic revolution in journalism of which their movement was the harbinger, but they stuck to their job, as did their colleagues bent on the same mission in various parts of the country. The report mentioned was the first product of their labours; others followed in the period which ended in December, 1917, when Central London saw the first fruits of its spade work. These documents possess permanent interest, and some value as economic surveys of the journalism of the Capital at the turn of the century.

Behind these old documents is the background of memory and the rich vintage of numberless confabulations of genial souls, many of whom have long since handed in their last story, but some of whom remain in the gallery of antiques in the Union Museum. Much valuable information was gathered at those wayside meetings about salaries, expenses (the source of many a joke), customs and privileges, all of which was duly pooled for practical use. One little incident looks rather entertaining in the haze of time. When we were discussing our wage proposals Horace Sanders was commissioned to report on a minimum, and he summoned a solemn conclave at the Mitre. It was not the famous tavern which once stood on the site of Hoare's Bank, where on a more memorable occasion Johnson and Boswell first met at supper and sat till one or two o'clock in the morning. Our sub-committee included P. E. Verstone (who later transferred to the Institute and became its President), and Horace Thorogood, of the *Star*. After much excogitation they decided to recommend £6 a week as the minimum to be sought. When they reported this the Branch Committee made it guineas. Although the figure had historical warrant it was thought by some to be a bit daring then. There was dignity in Victorian journalism, and salaries on the big staffs were not talked about. They were private business. So when the Union inquiry began there was a prejudice against disclosure.

It was my lot to manage this business for the Central London Branch at an early stage, and at an A.D.M., where delegates spoke of the difficulties of the wage census, I mentioned the system we adopted. In one office where there were 60 or 70 members, each individual was asked to put his salary on a slip of paper, without a name. This proved successful, and in fact a large percentage

signed the slips. There were many anxious discussions and furious arguments when we were engaged in the difficult and delicate task of drafting schedules. One contest, not without its humour, centred on the question whether sub-editors and reporters should have the same minimum. A strong body (chiefly sub-editors) argued that a sub-editor needed to be a man of more experience than a reporter, that the transfer of a reporter to the sub-editor's table was regarded as promotion; that the sub-editor worked continuously while on duty, whereas the reporter had frequent spells of rest between turns; and that the sub-editor was wholly responsible for the errors or defects in the reporter's story and therefore on the whole was entitled to a higher salary grading. On the other side it was contended that while the foregoing arguments might be true of provincial journalism, they were invalidated in London by special conditions. The sub-editor's need of greater experience was countered by the reporter's need of greater literary ability; the reporter's hours were irregular and on the average his industry equalled that of the sub-editor; the responsibility of the reporter exceeded that of the sub-editor because not only did he bear the brunt if his paper was "let down" on a story, but the go-ahead London paper depended more and more upon its own special reporting to boost its circulation.

Writing to the Union *Journal* in September, 1916, I said that the complexities in London were proving appalling in the compilation of wage schedules—the number of papers was so great, and the variety in character so extensive, involving infinite gradations of work. There was the vital necessity of laying a good and true foundation. Already, I reported, action had been taken to raise standards of wages for agency staffs and thus we had been forced to declare a minimum in that one direction, but beyond this, in regard to morning and evening papers, sporting, financial and trade papers, much inquiry had to be made before we could commit ourselves to definite scales of pay and grades of employment. One important point was the proportion of juniors to be allowed in a staff. Should two juniors be assigned for 10 seniors? From this arose the problem of the conditions of entry into journalism. When agency wages were first tackled in 1915 we aimed at a minimum of four guineas a week. We had the notion that the London News Agency was guilty of low standards, and so Foster, Meakin and I went to see Mr. Winton Thorpe, the chief of that agency. He was staggered when we suggested our figure (which became recognised, though without a formal agreement)

and the story is that he began to look for a buyer of the business. He did raise salaries, but ere long he sold the concern to the Press Association. Many men who have since made a name in the Street started on a pittance at the L.N.A. My old friend, the late George Beer, who had just learnt his job on a Gravesend weekly, started on the L.N.A. at 27/6 a week, and lived to receive high promotion from Lord Northcliffe.

Tom Foster, who had done nearly every job going in Fleet Street, was chief reporter on the L.N.A. at £3 10s. a week in 1899. His knowledge of life and work in Fleet Street is, I believe, unrivalled, and his memories would make a captivating book. His energies, and what spare time he has ever found, have, however, been employed in a direction which brought him no personal profit, but which served in an eminent degree the interests of his fellow journalists. That store of knowledge and experience has always been placed freely at the service of the Union ever since he joined up in Central London in 1909, and with its aid he exercised his natural aptitude for seeing all the points in a case, in drafting proposals to employers in the form of agreements and schedules. He is a generous man with money when need calls, and with his strength of mind and body when the Union calls, as it ever does to the willing worker. When the War Distress Fund was started in the Great War Foster got receipt No. 1. It was just a gift of 20 guineas, being the first war bonus he received on the *Daily Chronicle*. He did notable services in promoting matinees for that Fund, winding up with the direction of the great Coliseum effort, which realised £3,400. The matinee habit spread all over the country, and every promoter wrote to Foster for instructions how to proceed, and surely received a detailed reply written with infinite toil in his minute calligraphy. His letters, moreover, are frequently astonishing ebullitions of wit and wisdom and satire. When a Union enterprise is on, his detail is amazing. In 1916, when campaign pressure was intense and we organised a mass meeting for the South, Watts ended a letter to me from Manchester: "I am much obliged for the trouble to which you and Foster have gone in connection with the mass meeting. It is really amazing the amount of work Foster puts in. I hope he does not forget to charge for the wires he sends me." He probably did. In 1917, when Foster and I were working in double harness, he got a long letter from a member with a grievance and sent it on to me with the inscription: "Too busy. Refer Tater Spray Expert." The allusion was to my

allotment work at Dulwich in response to Lloyd George's call to dig for victory. One letter found is such a lovely little piece of irony that the temptation to print it is irresistible:

Private, confidential and candid.

D.C. (*Daily Chronicle*) Monday Morning (No date).

Dear Mansfield,—Why are you treating the President of the Union (Alf. Martin) in this callous fashion? He wrote you on Friday night making an appointment at the Press Club for 5-30 Sunday evening, and you failed to turn up. He has come to London specially to see you on one or two important matters, and was very disappointed that you were unable to confer with him after the matinee, or later at your tea interval. Of course he doesn't say so, but I do. He is now making one final desperate effort to get you to spare a few minutes for Union business. He asks me to tell you that he will attend at the Cafe Lyons in Ludgate Circus at 5-30 of the clock this (Monday) evening and will be grateful if you will condescend to give him audience. Must the land claim all your time? "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" as the Master said. I tried to get you on the telephone at 2 o'c this morning, but you could not be found. Just drop all this cant about "revolution in national character" and the soap suds spray, and attend to business.

By Order (signed) FOSTER.

In my own defence it must be added that the café talk was duly held and all was well. The difficulty about Martin was that, fine fellow personally though he was, and a first rate sporting journalist in Yorkshire, he was not well informed about our Fleet-Street business, which had been delegated to the men on the spot, with full authority to act. Of course when he came to London, very rarely, we treated him with the deference due to the President. The occasion mentioned by Foster must have been in June, 1917, on the day we held our first Distress Fund matinee at the Ambassadors' Theatre. Having heard on the telephone from Watts in Manchester that I had wired Watts announcing the good news that the N.P.A. had decided to receive the Union deputation, Martin wrote: "Of course I am without any details of what has happened *re* N.P.A. By the way, in view of the fact, as I understand it, that the N.P.A. covers Southern papers, do you think we ought to ask Brown (of Redhill) to be one of the deputation. If N.P.A. is entirely a London daily matter there would be no reason for asking him." The worthy President's second surmise was the fact. This little incident shows the difficulties of our lines of communication. We had enough to do to prepare for the fateful encounter with the N.P.A., and to keep Watts informed, without at the same time keeping Sheffield in line as well. Foster, of course, knew all this as well as I did, but

must have his little jest. Watts, with his usual diplomacy, persuaded Martin, who was far from well, that his health would not stand the racket of participation in the London negotiations. On December 11, when Martin was getting a bit jumpy about our N.P.A. interview, Watts wrote to me agreeing to the proposed personnel of the deputation, and added: "Martin has been on telephone to me to-day, and I told him he ought to be thankful, in his state of health, that he was not being dragged to London." Watts was a wise shepherd of his varied flock.

After this digression, I must round off my Fosteriana, inadequate though they be. Nearly thirty years on the National Executive, 21 years hon. general treasurer, President 1941-1942, over 30 years of unflagging and invaluable Union service in London—truly a cardinal figure in Union history. Tom Wisdom's aphorism that "Foster's career is Union history" can be verified by those who read this book and note his work, both in the routine that tells and in the crises that call for a leader. At times, in speaking and writing, he strikes a religious note. which the shallow critic characterises as "sob-stuff." For instance, at the Brighton A.D.M. of 1938, when the question of economies in grants from the Widow and Orphan Fund had to be faced, Foster, as the official who had to take the broad view of Union policy and commitments, declared that it might be said, not only of the living but of the dead, that so far as this little field of their work was concerned, they could await the Grand Audit with some measure of confidence. This appeal to spiritual verities is not surprising in one who was a Bible student before he turned to political economy. He combines subtlety in argument with breadth of principle. Nothing is too small or too big where a Union interest is at stake—the correct placing of a comma in an agreement or the production of a revolutionary scheme for Union re-organisation in London. His gruff manner often irritates, but pierce the rough crust and you find the great heart.

During the London blitz (in January, 1941) Foster and his wife had the misfortune of suffering the loss of their home at Streatham, and had to find refuge in furnished lodgings. It was in these straitened circumstances that Foster faced the ordeal of his presidential year. Most of his treasures and records were destroyed in the raid; but on one of his visits to search for salvage he fortunately found the manuscript of some "Notes on Union Wages Movement," which he wrote in 1920 for his old *Chronicle* editor, Mr. Robert Donald, as material for a lecture.

One or two extracts from this concise review are of value now:

In 1907, journalism, once almost a select profession, had become increasingly industrialised, and salaries, once fairly good in London and the large provincial centres, had shown a marked tendency to decline. At this moment in the economic history of an increasingly important calling a small group of workers, in Woolwich and Manchester almost simultaneously, got their heads together and determined that if sound business methods could save their colleagues and succeeding generations from the hardships that they themselves had endured, those methods could and would be adopted by them, in spite of their traditional Bohemianism and their interest in everybody's welfare but their own. In the forefront of this small band of pioneers were men like Newman Watts, G. H. Lethem, R. C. Spencer and F. J. Mansfield. The zeal and self-sacrifice of these men make one of the finest passages in journalistic history. All were working journalists, earning their living as journeymen at their trade; and the time they gave to the building up of the Union was taken from their spare hours of recreation or leisure or domestic enjoyment. They counted no personal inconvenience or sacrifice of income and health too great in their desire to lay broad and strong the foundations of a representative and democratically governed Union. As it was then, it is to-day. The Union has been built up by volunteers, men who sought not, nor thought of, rewards or honour.

Lest all this should look too much like the minutes of a mutual admiration society, let me disclaim the position of isolated pre-eminence here allotted to me, and say that my name may stand as the representative of a band of men in the South who were the pioneers. Elsewhere in these pages I endeavour to give credit where it is due. Foster goes on to point out, quite fairly, that the Union lacked real national momentum until Fleet-Street was won. When the first shock of the Great War had spent itself, proprietors found that they were not so badly off as had been feared, and with over 1,500 of the Union's 3,500 members in the Forces, they had to pay higher wages to retain the services of their best men. It was then that the Union found itself going forward on national lines, approaching individual firms no longer, but the organised bodies of newspaper proprietors. In this move London led the way on the big scale, though it was anticipated by the approach to the Northern Federation. This latter was a successful innovation and marked the transition from individual bargaining to corporate recognition. London was to implement this and to make a significant advance in the acceptance by the proprietors of a minimum. Before opening the story of the direct contact with the N.P.A. another little passage may be given from Foster's "Notes" as a bird's-eye view of the awakening of the Union to a realisation of its national scope:

It is on the betterment campaign of the past few years (approximately 1917-1920) rather than on its pioneer work that the N.U.J. should be tested. No wages movement on a national scale could be undertaken in the first few years. The spade work of the organisation had to be done first. Journalists were a completely unorganised, seemingly unorganisable, body. The Union's difficulty was that—unlike factory workers in close touch with each other daily and recognising their common interests—many journalists, particularly in the provinces and on trade papers and miscellaneous periodicals in London, were almost isolated, working alone or in twos and threes in small country or suburban offices. They were also, as a class, slow to accept trade union methods and principles, comparing themselves, as some do to-day, with members of the fee'd professions. But as the Union gained strength, first in Manchester, then in South Wales, and won its appeal to the common sense of all Lancashire, Yorkshire, the Midlands and Glasgow, its progress captured the imagination of London and the Southern counties, and the journeyman journalist—reporter, sub-editor and leader writer—began to see that he was part and parcel of a great and growing industry, a wage earner like other newspaper workers, and that as the reader and the compositor, the stereotyper, the packer and the machine minder were securing better conditions by collective bargaining, he also could only hope to improve his lot by adopting their methods.

The N.P.A., in which were combined the great national papers produced in London, was of course the most powerful body of proprietors in the whole newspaper industry, and to gain its goodwill and co-operation was the biggest and most responsible work to which the Union had yet set its hand. We were hampered by a weakness in our organisation. Headquarters were still at Manchester, though London was the obvious centre of the Union's national activities, and communications were too slow and roundabout, though telephone and telegraph were often busy. Added to this was the serious illness of W. N. Watts, which was soon to cause the suspension of his work on the *Manchester Evening News*, and to bring H. M. Richardson in as Acting-General-Secretary. Also Hugh Redwood, the chairman of Central London branch, broke down in health after some heavy work for the War Distress Fund matinee, and had to take a long rest in the country. Horace Thorogood returned to the chair of the branch.

Important questions of policy were decided by the National Executive Council meeting at Sheffield on August 25, 1917, and the most far-reaching was described in the official report as "a decided step forward in the wages movement." The method of local action and individual approach had achieved its maximum possibilities, but hundreds of our members had received no

increase, and the intolerable strain of meeting war costs of living had led to demands for drastic action. The Executive unanimously decided to ask the proprietors' organisations spread over the country for a general scale of increase on pre-war wages. These applications were sent out on August 30. The N.P.A. replied that it was unable to adopt the suggestion of a Union deputation to negotiate the proposal, and suggested that individual action by Union members was the best course. Discussion dragged on, and on November 1 the following, drafted by Foster and myself, was sent by Watts to the N.P.A., of which Mr. T. Sanders was then the secretary:

As matters now stand some employers in London have given increases and bonuses and some have not, and we are strongly of opinion it would be a more equitable solution of the whole question to deal with it on a collective basis. It was this view which caused us to seek negotiation with your Association, and we would now request you to re-consider the matter. We would urge two important points which support us in so doing:—

1. The Newspaper Federation, which, as you are doubtless aware, consists of proprietors of the daily papers of the North and Midlands, on receiving our application for an all-round increase on pre-war rates, immediately arranged to receive a deputation from our Union. We met them at Manchester and presented our case, which was thoroughly discussed. The facts and arguments we were able to present were so convincing that within a week or so the Federation notified us that they had agreed to recommend their members (i.e., the proprietors of daily papers) to pay a war bonus almost equal in all the various categories to the scale of increases we had asked for. We mention this fact as a clear illustration of the advantage of the course we are proposing to you. It is obviously fair, we hold, in an emergency like the present, when the pressure of the cost of living on our members is so acute, that all proprietors should pay a reasonable increase; and to secure that end a collective settlement of the issue as between your Association and our Union is the best way out.

2. We would also point out that your Association, consisting of proprietors of London dailies, deals with other classes of labour engaged in newspaper production collectively, and the facilities you accord to compositors and others can scarcely, in equity or in courtesy, be denied to the members of the editorial staffs, whom our Union represents.

In view of the lead given by the provincial proprietors in this method of negotiation we feel sure that London proprietors will not wish to stand aloof and thus interfere with the uniformity of action which is so desirable. Such a voluntary settlement as we are seeking to obtain is the best preparation for the co-operation of employers and employed which the Government is now aiming at in its adoption of the Whitley scheme of joint councils. We ask for the favour of your early consideration of this appeal in view of the unrest which undoubtedly prevails in offices where proper recognition of present conditions has not been given in increased salaries.

On November 9 Mr. Sanders wrote:

Your letter of 1st inst. was considered by my Council at their meeting yesterday. I am desired to say that they are in complete sympathy with the payment of adequate remuneration to the members of editorial staffs. Indeed, London newspaper proprietors have always prided themselves on the payment of reasonable if any (?not) generous salaries, and the Council are unaware of any instance in which this practice is not followed. They believe that due consideration has been given to the increased cost of living resulting from the War. In these circumstances the Council feel that no useful object would be gained by a conference such as you suggest. If there are sporadic cases in which journalists engaged on London daily newspapers are being inadequately remunerated, the Council feel confident that the anomaly will be satisfactorily adjusted if the attention of the proprietors concerned is directed to the matter.

The preparation of the retort by Foster, Veitch and myself for the guidance of Watts followed, and it was sent to the N.P.A. on November 16:

In reply to yours of Nov. 9 my Executive Council is glad to learn that the N.P.A. is "in complete sympathy with the payment of adequate remuneration to the members of editorial staffs," and all that we seek is a practical expression of this sympathy uniformly in every staff. You say your Council "is unaware of any instance" to the contrary. We unfortunately do know of such instances in London and desire an opportunity of discussing the question with your Association in order that the facts may be brought out. We presume that your Association would be glad to have this information, as it shows that uniformity does not exist in the carrying out of the object expressed in your letter. You believe that "due consideration has been given to the increased cost of living." The whole point of our appeal to you is that, while we gladly recognise that in some offices bonuses have been given, in others there has not only been no such consideration, but for a time wages were actually reduced and the money thus lost to staffs has not been restored. The "consideration" of which you speak has not in these cases received its appropriate practical expression.

"If there are sporadic cases" of inadequate remuneration you state that such anomalies would be adjusted by approach to the proprietors concerned. We would ask who is better qualified to call their attention to this than your Association itself, particularly as such omission to pay adequate salaries is contrary to your pronounced policy, and as your Council feels that attention needs only to be directed to it to obtain the remedy. It is because we believe your Association is fully in sympathy with our object, and would have the influence necessary, that we desire to co-operate with them. We feel it is due to the N.P.A. that we should recognise its existence and its authority. Judging the trend of events it is clear that these questions will have to be settled by the co-operation of proprietors and staffs under the Government scheme of reconstruction (*vide* the Whitley report). What better opportunity than the present to begin? Therefore may we again urge upon you the holding of a conference between your Association and the N.U.J. Executive. These views are

put forward with the approval of the whole Union, with a membership of 3,500 working journalists, including 600 members on staffs of papers in London which we believe are represented in your Association.

Our persistency and, may I say, the force of our arguments, opened the door. But a new obstacle was interposed. On November 24 Mr. Sanders wrote that the N.P.A. Council had considered our letter in conjunction with one from the Institute of Journalists "dealing with the same subject," and had decided "to receive a joint deputation of both bodies, on some date mutually convenient." He asked us to fix a date with the Institute. His Council felt that it would be impossible to carry on negotiations upon the same subject matter with two different associations. To this we made the only possible reply, namely that we could not participate in a joint deputation, because of the proprietorial element in the Institute membership. To the Institute we wrote: "The Union has serious complaint to make against proprietors who are members of the Institute—proprietors whom your deputation would, by reason of that membership, represent." There was a curious admission in Mr. Sander's answer to our objection: "The question of the proprietorial representation on the Institute of Journalists did not occur to our Council. The proposal was to deal jointly with the two bodies who claim to represent journalists in respect to certain claims for increased remuneration." In the end our suggestion that the N.P.A. should receive separate deputations from Institute and Union was accepted. On December 6 Mr. Sanders wrote to say that an *ad hoc* committee of the N.P.A. would be prepared to meet a Union deputation on December 14 at 3-30 and the representatives of the Institute would be received at 2-30. He asked for a short statement of the specific points the Union would raise. On December 10 Watts told the Wages Committee: "I am very much off colour at present and it will probably save time if Mansfield now deals direct with Sanders." Three days before Watts wrote me: "I have had something of a set-back and am seeing a specialist. I have been thinking it would be better if you took up correspondence with Sanders. It will save time. Let me know whether you agree." This telegram went to Watts on December 8: "Will carry on London end. Best Wishes. Mansfield."

Mansfield to N.P.A. 10th December, 1917.

Owing to the illness of Mr. Watts, our General Secretary, I am asked by our Executive to take charge of the correspondence with your Association. In accordance with your favour of the 6th inst., our deputation will wait on your Committee next Friday, at 3-30, and will be composed

as follows:—F. J. Mansfield, Vice-President of the Union; W. Veitch, General Treasurer and Chairman of the Parliamentary Branch of the Union; T. Foster, Secretary of the Central London Branch; and a representative of the Parliamentary Branch (probably Mr. T. Cox Meech). The main points we propose to raise are:

1.—The urgent need of levelling up salaries according to a scale of minima. We shall submit a scale which has been framed for normal times, and which is subject to agreed increases to meet war-time conditions (great increase in the cost of living, etc.). Increases have been granted to all other sections of newspaper workers. 2.—Proposal that, following recommendation by your Committee, a joint Committee should be set up to deal with questions arising in offices which do not fall into line, and other details. The scale of minima we propose to submit will be classified and graded to meet the diversity of conditions in London.

Note the introduction of the minimum salary proposal. Besides the approach to collective bargaining, the year 1917 saw the growth in favour of the principle of minimum wage scales. At a conference of Southern branches in London in December, 1916, the decision was to continue the campaign for wage increases to meet the high cost of living, and to proceed by branch action, with Head Office interposition where necessary, but also branches were strongly urged without delay to prepare minimum scales for their own areas to enable the Executive to complete a comprehensive schedule of minimum rates for the various grades of journalistic labour throughout the country. It was clearly felt by the conference that the establishment of minima substantially above those existing would promote stability. At the same period Central London published a skeleton scale for the chief departments in London, received "from a correspondent." The suggested minima were:—Agency staff men £4 4s.; trade, class, sporting and miscellaneous papers, according to class, £4 4s. to £6 6s.; weekly newspapers £5 5s. to £6 6s.; morning and evening papers, senior sub-editors and reporters £7 7s., general ditto £6 6s.; junior reporters (not to number more than one-fifth of the reporting staffs) £5 5s.; sporting staffs of daily papers, £4 4s. to £7 7s. These figures were professedly based on war costs of living, on the certainty that there would be little reduction of those costs for years after the war. This drew a strong and perfectly fair protest that the agency minimum was inadequate and made no distinction between reporters and sub-editors.

Leaving London for the moment and looking at the whole Union, it took twelve years of the process of "trial by error" to reach the establishment of the first national minimum of £3 per week for the provinces (conceded by the Newspaper Society in

1919). The first conference in 1907 ordered an inquiry into "fixing a basis for a minimum wage." At Leeds in 1908 it was felt to be impossible to set up anything like a standard, a Woolwich motion that no member should offer his services as a reporter for less than 30/- per week was dropped, and the N.E.C. was asked to pursue inquiries, the fear being expressed that "to fix a minimum would prejudice men in receipt of good salaries." In 1914 Meakin produced a scheme for a series of standard minima for groups of papers or for offices; the A.D.M. of that year in its National Programme looked for a series of rates of pay "with due regard to the variations in local conditions," and in 1915 Manchester advanced the scheme of minima equal to the T.A. rates. These were the main stages in the movement, leading to Meakin's big report to the Glasgow A.D.M. in 1916 referred to in the preceding chapter. He was a cautious man, always well primed with fact and figure, and he seemed to move almost unwillingly to the national minimum. At that time his opinion was that in view of the "astonishing variety of wages all the Union could do was to get out scales for each district, grouping papers produced under pretty similar conditions. Then if they approached proprietors district by district, or arbitration was local, these lists would suffice"; but, he promised: "I propose to prepare a more elaborate scheme, providing for rates for specific kinds of papers in the provincial towns according to population, and in the rural areas. This could be used if national arbitration became possible something after the Australian style." In Australia the industrial law provided for the fixing of salaries by the Arbitration Court. Their rates were higher in 1920 than our own. In the best States the morning minimum for seniors was £9 5s. compared with London's £8 8s. Grading of staffs for salary had long been in existence in the Dominion, and the cost of living was substantially less than in London.

Fortunately the problem in London was not quite so intractable; though the wage variations were many and the numbers affected very large, we were dealing with classes of newspapers of a more or less uniform type. The minimum was still a bogey to some, who feared that it would tend to become the maximum, but the appeal to economic law as applied to our profession prevailed. The Union negotiators in Fleet-Street took the bold and courageous course of resolving to fight for the establishment of a fair basic standard as the best foundation of the wage fabric. Hence our letter to the N.P.A. of December 10 given above. It was the

first large scale minimum movement undertaken by the Union. When it was announced it was a sensation; when it succeeded it was a victory. Alf. Martin, in his presidential address at the ensuing A.D.M., said that the interview with the N.P.A., was primarily fixed for the purpose of considering the war bonus scale put forward by the Union, but it "took an important turn, namely, the discussion of the minimum scale which our London branches had, most fortunately, ready for presentation." There was an element of truth in this, but we did not, like the conjuror, produce our scales like rabbits out of a hat. We achieved our deliberate object of stabilising the better position of years before, when Fleet-Street had its unwritten standards of salary. Evidently Martin, and indeed a large part of the provincial membership, thought that there had been a sudden change of front, and a last minute adaptation by the deputation to a new situation.

The facts are that the Union leaders in London had given long and careful thought to the shape of things to come, and, accepting Foster's arguments for the "Plimsoll line" of the minimum as sound, had come to regard it as the wisest line of advance, if it could be attempted. We felt that if we could make the old gentlemanly standard of the later Victorian days, plus a war time addition, a firm basis we should have something to build on in the future, whereas to secure a general increase on the medley of salary rates existing would be to perpetuate chaos. The N.E.C. application to the N.P.A. in August came to be recognised as quite inadequate for Fleet-Street. The advances asked for were: on salaries of £2 15s. and under, 15/- a week.; up to £4, 12/6; up to £5, 10/-; over £5, 7/6. So we exercised the powers of decision given us, and before going into conference informed the N.P.A. that minimum scales, plus war additions, were our main objective. There was some criticism of Central London for thus taking the question into its own hands. Our reply was that if we had to some extent thrown over the authority of the N.E.C. it was only owing to the alertness of the negotiators in recognising that their opportunity had arrived. We played the best cards with which the deal provided us. When success came criticism was silenced; where Fleet-Street led, the whole country was to follow.

In spite of the commercialisation of journalism, then becoming manifest, there survived in editorial staffs, from top to bottom, much of the old *camaraderie*, and we had many friends among the "executives" who sat in the Council of the N.P.A. to decide our economic fate. Something akin to the process known at West-

minster as lobbying pervaded the courts and alleys of Fleet-Street. We counted ourselves fortunate in the support of Lord Northcliffe, who, although he did not attend the N.P.A. meetings in person, was the dominating influence in its policy. The chief figure in the proceedings of the N.P.A. was Lord Burnham, the owner of the *Daily Telegraph*, and an Institute man with no fondness for the Union. A rather surprising bit of information was given me by one manager, who said: "It was Lord Burnham who first got the Union 'recognition.' There was opposition to receiving your deputation. Lord Burnham, said 'they are journalists and we should see them.' Apparently Lord Burnham was under the impression that he was paying the best salaries in Fleet-Street. Later he changed his attitude somewhat." Sir George Riddell, Mr. Robert Donald and James Heddle were valued friends. On the part of *The Times* the feeling was that, as the Union was weak in numbers in the office, the paper was not directly interested in the N.P.A. negotiations. When it was pointed out that Union policy was based on principle and was calculated to benefit all journalists, whether members or not, sympathy was expressed with that aim, and the Union proposals were regarded as a reasonable and practicable way of meeting difficulties. Moreover that paper was held to treat its staff well. Seeing that Lord Northcliffe was the proprietor of *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*, his backing for our enterprise was of the first importance. Anxious that *The Times* should be represented at the N.P.A. meeting, Foster wrote a letter of strong appeal, but the problem was how to get in touch with Lord Northcliffe, as he was out of the country. During the war he had left his house in St. James's Street and taken smaller quarters at 8, Buckingham Gate. On the eve of the interview with the N.P.A., Foster, having worked all night, found out the place and ascertained that Lord Northcliffe was expected to call there that morning, on his return from abroad, but intended to go straight on to his house in Thanet. Foster left his letter on the promise that it would surely be handed to "the Chief" (as all his people called him) when he came. The following telegram reached Foster at home at Streatham in the afternoon, and was sufficient reward for his effort:

BROADSTAIRS, December 13, 1917.

Have only just arrived from France, and had not heard of the matter. Cannot be in London Thursday but will of course see that *The Times* is represented. You know my views about the remuneration of my colleagues of the Press. NORTHCLIFFE.

Lord Northcliffe to F. J. Mansfield.

ELMWOOD, ST. PETER'S, KENT. 15th December, 1917.

My dear Mansfield,—I have not been able to devote more than four or five hours to newspaperdom since I returned. My daily War Mission task (head of the British War Mission to America) is a very heavy one. I had not heard anything about the deputations until I received Mr. Foster's letter, which followed me here. It seems to me a pity that there should be two separate deputations to the N.P.A. You know that the Union will have my support in any reasonable negotiations with the newspaper proprietors. I am one of the few newspaper owners who have been through the mill of reporting, sub-editing and editing, and I have very vivid and resentful recollections of underpaid work for overpaid millionaires.—Yours sincerely, NORTHCLIFFE.

(The word "reasonable" was inserted in Northcliffe's own handwriting after the letter had been typewritten).

Our deputation to the N.P.A. on December 14 comprised Foster, Mansfield and Veitch, as executive members, with C. T. King and Primrose Stevenson, of the Parliamentary Branch. Lord Burnham was in the chair, and practically the whole of the daily papers of London and the national weeklies, 28 in all, were represented, mostly by men on the managerial side. The Institute went in before us, led by Sir Alfred Robbins. Our information afterwards was that they proposed without qualification a 25 per cent. increase on all salaries. As this would have meant £250 for the £1,000 a year man it was quite a courageous effort. Our demands were reasonable by comparison. We hadn't many £1,000 a year men to trouble about. In view of the historic importance of the occasion the full text of our statement and documents are given. The duty of opening for the Union was assigned to Mansfield, who said:

We come before you today as a deputation representing an organisation which is thoroughly national in character. Our total membership in the ninety or more branches in Great Britain is 3,500, all of whom, excluding for the moment the 1,400 or 1,500 who are in the Army or Navy, are journalists actually earning their living in the profession. In the seven branches of the London area we have a membership of over 700; the Central London branch alone, which has its centre in Fleet-street, has just over 500 members, and the Parliamentary, or Press Gallery Branch, has 75 members. The Union is linked also, by working agreements, with similar professional organisations in the Oversea Dominions. Needless to say we meet you, not in any unduly aggressive attitude. Our assumption, based on personal knowledge of most of you, is that you desire, not less earnestly than we, the betterment of our common profession. Being men who read the papers as well as help to produce them, we recall the public utterances of men like the late Lord Burnham, of honoured memory, at Press Fund and other functions, emphasising the dignity and importance

of the Fourth Estate. That good tradition, we believe, it is the desire of the present Lord Burnham to continue. We recall also the splendid work done by Mr. Donald a few years ago in his efforts to quicken the consciences of newspaper proprietors throughout the country to a sense of the danger of paying miserably low salaries to their editorial staffs ; and we have special private knowledge of the sympathy and initiative of Viscount Northcliffe in measures for the uplifting of the profession.

In the same spirit, but on its own carefully thought-out lines, the National Union of Journalists has been working for some years now to raise the general level of salaries and to rid the profession of the slightest taint of cheap labour. That work, on trade union principles, though not with militant trade union methods, has met with a substantial measure of success in all parts of the Kingdom, but as yet we are far from the end that we ought to keep in view if the England of the future is to retain as a national asset an efficient and trustworthy press. War time conditions have forced this question into a position of primary importance and we have found it necessary to take a step that is novel to journalism, namely, to approach the proprietors' federations in order to seek a remedy for anomalies that admittedly press hardly on working journalists.

Our policy has been carefully directed to the levelling-up of the lower-paying offices to the standard set by employers of good repute, whose action in London we gladly recognise. From the point of view of the proprietor, the payer of low salaries competes unfairly with the good, and we submit on this and on other grounds that our attempt to secure a basis of equality in the treatment of staffs as between the various offices is in the interests of the whole industry. It is true in journalism, as in the great industrial trades, that low remuneration diminishes profits and excessive hours depress output. Every good business man recognises that in the long run cheap labour does not pay.

Our purpose to-day is to submit to you a schedule of minimum scales of salaries for adoption in the offices you represent. There may be some objection to the use of the word " minimum " because it smacks of trade unionism, and the National Union is sometimes criticised because it is a registered trade union claiming to represent a body of professional men. Our reply is that the status of a body is determined by the quality and character of its membership, and that our Union is no more and no less a trade union than the British Medical Association or the Law Society, for all essential purposes. We are all *bona fide* journalists, the qualification for our membership being that we earn our living in journalism. If the lawyer can have his trade union fee why should not the journalist? Then the word " minimum " is a bogey only to those who have no real insight into the economic position of the journalist. The basic fact is that there is, and always has been, an actual minimum in the shape of the lowest salary paid. We have carefully investigated the actual statistics of journalistic pay, and in framing our scales we have adopted the traditional Fleet-street standard maintained in the best offices. We cannot see how even the most prejudiced and ill-informed of our critics can take exception to this proposal. If the barrister's minimum does not prevent Sir John Simon from being briefed at a few thousand guineas, how can it be contended that a minimum for journalists will so stereotype salaries as to rob the more highly skilled man of the reward of his ability?

The recognised minimum in the chief London offices has been for a generation £6 6s. a week for a competent sub-editor or reporter, with higher salaries according to capacity and responsibility of work. This is higher than the salaries in the Provinces, the position of London being unique. It is the national and Imperial centre, and its newspapers enjoy corresponding status and importance. The natural result is that the salaries of its staffs, who have to do work of the greatest importance and highest quality, are on the highest scale in the country. But there is not really so great a gap between the biggest staffs in the provinces and London. On the former, salaries range at four, five and six guineas and upwards. A brief comparison will show that the differences are easily accounted for on economic grounds. London is the most expensive place to work in, rents are higher, the time spent away from home is longer—consequently the cost of meals away from home is considerable—and there is the greater responsibility of the work itself. Our scale of minima is a pre-war scale, which we should have presented long ago if the war had not intervened. It is based on the conditions existing before August, 1914. Since then the cost of living has advanced by leaps and bounds. The increase in the price of food, adopting the Board of Trade statistical method, is 106 per cent. If we take into account all the items of a householder's budget of course the figure is lower, but even then the net all-round increase is 85 per cent. What has the journalist received to compensate him for this very serious rise? Some proprietors have alleviated the hardship by voluntary concession of bonuses, but there are some who have given nothing.

While the editorial rank and file, sub-editors and reporters, have in many cases been ignored, they have constantly had to record in the columns they fill in their own papers, the granting of bonus on bonus to all kinds of workers—notably to the other classes of workers employed, so to speak, under the same roof as themselves. From machine room basement to photographer's attic, every floor of the building has received concessions except the editorial floor. Linotype operators, machinists, warehousemen, packers, stereotypers, readers, even proof pullers and messenger boys, have had extra pay to meet wartime conditions, but the unfortunate journalist who, after all, is the brain of the whole concern, gets nothing, and has even been told in some cases when his Union has taken action on his behalf, that this is an undignified procedure. Worse than that, he has seen a tendency in recent years to break down the traditional standard to which we have referred. Our object is to maintain the fair standard by agreement with the proprietors. In our correspondence with your Association we have pressed strongly for an arrangement between the two representative bodies, because we realise that to be the most satisfactory form of settling the question. The adoption of a schedule in which the different classes of employment are properly graded and classified, and their minimum remuneration fixed, and the observance of that schedule by all proprietors and staffs, is, we submit, the fairest solution, and it can only be gained by all-round recognition and agreements, having the force of collective sanction. With anything less than that some employers will give smaller concessions than their more enlightened competitors, or none at all, and so perpetuate injustice. Our schedule is a pre-war one,

and we propose to ask you to add to it an agreed percentage which would go some way towards meeting the burdens of these abnormal times.

A few words as to efficiency and responsibility. While the standard of pay has remained stationary or has fallen below the level of previous years, the demanded standards of skill, knowledge and even physical fitness have risen. The great bulk of our members are not mere "contributors to the press," but the men who get the papers out, sub-editors and reporters, the backbone of the profession and of the industry. The work of these men gives individuality and character to the news side of the paper. They bear the brunt of the modern hustle of getting to press; their care and judgment may save their employers thousands of pounds in damages for libel. On the top of these normal responsibilities we have had in war time the anxieties of Defence of the Realm Regulations, and the worries and perplexities of the Press Censorship. What the war's aftermath will be we cannot tell. But certainly with possible industrial upheavals, with great measures of political reform, with a speedy revival of the national sports and pastimes, there can be no thought of going back to the leisurely days of twenty-five years ago, even if we wished. Whether we like it or not, we are in for strenuous days and nights. We have to face times in which alert brain and sound physique will tell. Many of us now at the game may break under the strain, as some have done already. Is it too much to ask employers to ameliorate our conditions and to help us to keep up the tradition of the profession by paying salaries that will attract the best men for the work? We are in competition with other professions offering inducements of more leisure and higher salaries. We must see that the race does not deteriorate and that the professional standard is not lowered.

To get right down to business we now make this practical suggestion—that the details of the schedule and the war bonus to be added, should be thrashed out by a Committee of your Association composed of editorial experts, in friendly conference with Union representatives. The matter is urgent, because in the offices where no consideration has been shown there is natural dissatisfaction. We should be glad to see the negotiation well under way before Christmas, and are prepared to sit with you during any holiday that may then arise. Our proposal has this extra merit: the joint committee thus set up would be, at a later stage, the practical body for dealing with defects as they are made known and with delinquents as they are brought officially to notice. Thus there would come into being at least a section of "joint council" of the Whitley Report type, which it will be necessary for the newspaper trades to set up before long, in compliance with the request of the Government.

The Schedules presented included the following:

DAILY NEWSPAPERS (Morning and Evening):

General News Staff.—Sub-editors: junior, none, senior, £6 6s.; Reporters: junior £5 5s., senior £6 6s.

In case of sub-editors, not less than two-fifths of staff (excluding chief-sub) to be paid higher salaries, for more responsible work, ranging, as at present, from £7 7s. to £10 10s. Junior reporters to receive annual increment of 10/6 for first two years. Not more than one-fifth of reporting staff, in any period, to be juniors.

Sports Staff.—Reporter or sub-editor: junior £4 4s., senior £5 5s.

Annual increments of 10/6 assured in each case for at least two years. Equal proportion of juniors and seniors.

Special descriptive or Note Writers, £6 6s.

City (or Financial) Office.—City editor's chief assistant, £6 6s.; second assistant, £5 5s.

Law Courts Staff.—£6 6s. weekly, or its equivalent over the terms. Extra 10/6 each engagement in evening after a day in Courts.

NATIONAL WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS AND SUNDAYS: Sub-editors, juniors £5 5s., seniors £6 6s.; Reporters (if any), £5 5s.

Sub-editors: Not more than two-fifths of sub-editorial staff to be juniors.

For one day (Saturday) engagements: Sub-editor or reporter, general news or sport, £1 1s. for reasonable working day.

SPACEMEN (All newspapers):—Minimum of 5/- per engagement, with guarantee of guinea for reasonable working day. Larger problem of spacemen to be dealt with in fuller detail after war, subject to extent to which space work is revived as conditions approach "normal."

DAILY SPORTS NEWSPAPERS:—

Sub-editor or reporter, junior £4 4s., senior £5 5s. Both rising by 10/6 a year over two years. Equal proportion junior and senior.

Special writers £6 6s.

PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS:—

Newspaper Staff men £5 5s.; Agency men £3 13s. 6d. plus 2/- commission on each published negative (*not* per reproduction).

PARLIAMENTARY PRESS GALLERY:—

Note-taking: Agencies and Newspaper corps (annuals), £6 6s.; (sessionals) £6 6s. (or its equivalent during guaranteed session of 32 weeks).

Extra Turns: Morning Papers (per day or part of day) £1 1s.; Evening Papers (per afternoon, except when House meets at noon or earlier) 10s. 6d., (when House meets at noon or earlier) £1 1s.

Sketch Writers: Morning Papers (per week) £8 8s.; Evening papers (per day) for publication same afternoon, 10s. 6d., for publication following afternoon, £1 1s.

The gentlemen round the big horse-shoe table were courteous, most of them friendly, a few critical. We answered many questions, and discussed several points. Some were curious to know the strength of the Union in various offices, and we were able to give figures. A descriptive account in the *Journalist* said that we found something of the Institute atmosphere when we went in; a spirit of "percentage camouflage" about. But we soon got on the right line and, judging by results, we made good. We had expected to fight a long battle over details in a small joint committee, but the N.P.A. appointed its own committee straight away and their recommendations were approved and sent on to us five days after the interview. The promptitude of the response was an agreeable surprise to the whole Union. There were

important points still to be negotiated and Foster's skill and insight were invaluable in the drafting of schedules and memoranda. On December 17 we found it necessary to clarify our position as follows:

Foster, Veitch and Mansfield to N.P.A.

We think it will help your Association if we set out briefly the three suggestions made in Mr. Mansfield's opening statement last Friday. These are:—(1) The adoption of a schedule of minimum salaries (based on pre-war conditions) for normal times; (2) The addition of an agreed percentage increase worked out on the adopted minimum figures; (3) Discussion and agreement by a Joint Committee of the N.P.A. and N.U.J.

We called attention to the fact that, in several London offices, increases ranging from 10 to over 15 per cent. had been granted on salaries now equal to or above our suggested minima, and we suggested that an agreement might be reached on that basis for application to other offices. But certain points of cross examination, particularly a serious reference to a £500 increase on a £5,000 salary, left us with the impression that our request No. 2 had not been clearly understood. We are not seeking to apply an unqualified percentage increase on an ascending scale of salaries. We suggest that the agreed percentage be struck on the adopted minimum, and that this resulting figure be the increase also on salaries above the minimum. Perhaps we should have been better understood if we had said "an agreed sum." This, of course, means, as one of our members explained, a declining percentage all the way up the salary list. A sum equal to 15 per cent. on £6 6s., for instance, would scarcely be 5 per cent. on 20 guineas. This accords with our principle of helping the lower paid man without deliberate detriment to the man of higher salaries.

N.P.A. to N.U.J.

6, BOUVERIE STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4, 20th Dec., 1917.

Referring to the conference which took place on Friday last, I am desired to send you the accompanying recommendations which have been issued by my Council to the members of this Association. You will observe that the recommendations are based on the suggestions put forward by your deputation. The Council hope and believe that their action will result in the removal of the grievances complained of.—THOS. SANDERS, Secretary.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF N.P.A. COUNCIL CONCERNING REMUNERATION OF EDITORIAL STAFFS.

DAILY NEWSPAPERS (morning and evening other than sports papers).—That no qualified sub-editor shall be paid less than £6 6s. per week. That no qualified reporter engaged in general reporting work shall be paid less than £5 5s. per week, and that after two years service on the same paper his wages shall be not less than £6 6s. In the case of sports staff the amounts to be reduced by one guinea.

SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS.—That no qualified sub-editor working a full week shall be paid less than £5 5s. and that after two years service on the same paper his wages shall be not less than £6 6s. For one day (Saturday) engagements sub-editors or reporters (general news or sport) shall be paid one guinea for a reasonable working day.

SPACEMEN (all newspapers).—Minimum of 5/- per engagement, ordered, with guarantee of one guinea for a reasonable working day.

DAILY SPORTING NEWSPAPERS.—That no qualified sub-editor or reporter shall be paid less than £4 4s. per week, and that after two years service on the same paper his wages shall be not less than £5 5s.

PARLIAMENTARY (note-taking).—That annuals and sessionals shall be paid not less than £6 6s. per week and that the following rates shall apply to extra turns and sketch writers:—Extra turns: Morning papers (per day or part of day) £1 1s.; Evening papers (per afternoon except when House meets at noon or earlier) 10s. 6d., (when House meets at noon or earlier) £1 1s. Sketch writers: Morning papers (per week) £8 8s., Evening papers (per day) for publication same afternoon, 10s. 6d., for publication following afternoon, £1 1s.

ANCILLARY SERVICES:—There are engaged in all offices a number of men performing ancillary services who do not come within the definitions contained in the foregoing schedule. It is recommended that the remuneration of these men shall be continued as heretofore having regard to the nature and importance of the services rendered.

WOMEN JOURNALISTS.—In view of the diversity in the experience, knowledge, and duties of women journalists, the Committee feel unable at the present time to make any recommendations for their inclusion in this scale.

WAR BONUS.—The Committee are informed that certain offices have already paid war bonuses or advances to their editorial staffs. They are of opinion that having regard to the increased cost of living this example should be generally followed.

Mansfield and Veitch to Wages Committee, N.U.J.

Dec. 27, 1917.—The action of the N.P.A. gives us much satisfaction, as it carries recognition of the Union and of the principle of the minimum wage, for the first time, we believe, in the history of journalism in this country. This can be said, of course, without forgetting that there are points in the situation which require careful watching and safeguarding.

N.B.—The N.P.A. had made "recommendations," not contracted an agreement.

Mansfield to N.P.A.

Letter of Dec. 31, 1917, thanked the N.P.A. for its prompt action, but asked for clarification of points in the following memorandum, and offered, as the sex question had been raised, to include a woman in a suggested deputation.

"QUALIFIED" SUB-EDITOR OR REPORTER.—We note with some misgiving the introduction of the word "qualified" describing the class of reporters and sub-editors who are to be entitled to the minimum salaries. As there is no examination test in journalism, the final decision as to qualification has always rested with the proprietor or editor engaging a new member of the staff. We are of opinion that no new issue should be raised challenging that right. Hitherto we have taken it for granted that employers would engage none but qualified persons. We should like to continue on that assumption, in fairness to our employers. But the considered introduction of this limitation in a minimum salaries clause, without an accompanying clause vetoing the engagement of the unqualified, opens the door to the engagement of men or women at a lower salary. Any

employer might decide to pay less than the minimum on the ground that the person engaged is not " qualified." This, you will see, would leave unredressed the present evil of unfair competition among employers, and would help to perpetuate low salaries and inefficiency, the very things which, we presume, you desire to remove. We ask you, therefore, to delete this word, and to proceed as before in the practice of engaging none but the competent.

WOMEN JOURNALISTS.—This clause raises a vast issue, altogether out of proportion to the practical matters needing our immediate attention. The sex question in this critical form has never before been raised in journalism. We suggest that it should not and need not be raised now. Our aim should be to settle this matter on business lines, not political. Women, we presume, have been engaged in journalism not as women, but because they were journalists qualified for the particular class of work for which they were engaged. Most of them in normal times, fall into the classification of " ancillary services." To that extent the problem solves itself. We are left to deal with women who are general reporters or sub-editors, probably not more than 12 or 14 on all the London newspapers. Surely it is possible for employers to deal with these cases on the principle of equal pay for the same class of work. No trade union or professional body has ever yet been seriously asked to surrender that sound economic principle. Where a woman has been engaged as a general reporter or sub-editor, and is being continued in that position, her work ought to entitle her to the same minimum salary as a man similarly classified. " Diversity in experience, knowledge and duties " applies to all journalists alike, men and women. There is no dividing line of sex governing journalistic ability. In each case an employer has the right to decide whether or not a person engaged is qualified for the work to be undertaken. By deleting this clause you leave that right undisputed. By insisting on its retention you provoke new discontent, you raise a vast political issue, you do an injustice to the whole body of women journalists, and you open the door to cheap and dangerous labour which may drive more efficient men out of journalism and so degrade the whole profession. This barring clause does not solve a problem ; it raises a greater one. You will see, therefore, that the matter cannot reasonably rest where it is. We recognise that there may be difficulties in certain individual cases, but we believe that in a friendly discussion specifically devoted to this problem it would be possible to find a mutually satisfactory solution.

" NOT LESS THAN."—These words, common to other clauses, are omitted from your recommendation of one guinea for Saturday engagements on weekly papers. We presume this is a clerical omission. Some papers, as you are aware, already pay 30/- and two guineas for this class of work. We suggested one guinea as an irreducible minimum, not as a price to be stereotyped.

PHOTOGRAPHER PRESSMEN.—The omission of this class of journalist from your recommendations leaves us in doubt as to whether you intend to include him under the term " reporter engaged in general reporting work." He is, of course, a general reporter under modern newspaper conditions. To the picture paper, presenting its news in pictures, the photographer reporter is scarcely less valuable than the descriptive reporter

is to the general newspaper. Tact, enterprise, and news instinct, and a readiness to take risks, are needed in finding and presenting a picture that tells a story and stirs the imagination, whether in a disaster or a Royal procession. The King, Scotland Yard and Downing-street, have paid their tribute of praise quite recently to the tactful conduct of this class of pressman compared with the offensive showman methods of a few years ago. We think you will wish to see this standard maintained in all public events. The salary we suggested, £5 5s., is already being paid in Fleet-street for this class of work.

SPORTS JOURNALISM.—No provision is made for the note writer under this head although you have not challenged our classification on this feature of Parliamentary work. This omission places sports journalism, sometimes highly technical work, on a plane more inferior than we intended. In suggesting a lower salary for sports reporters and sub-editors we had in mind the opportunities that arise for men of ability to reach the £6 6s. standard by specialising as note writers on some branch of sport. With this class omitted, reporters and sub-editors may be continued on the lower scale of remuneration although doing special work. May we suggest, as a compromise, that the £4 4s. minimum shall be subject to annual increments of 10/6, rising to £6 6s. in four years, for men over 24 years of age.

GENERAL REPORTERS.—We suggest that progress in this case from £5 5s. to £6 6s. in two years, should be by two annual increments of 10/6 each.

WAR BONUS.—We note with regret the omission of a specified sum or percentage from your recommendation under this head. The concessions already made range from 10 to 16 per cent. This was our suggested basis. It is important to have a sum mentioned, we think, because, of course, we are all agreed, that our schedule of minimum salaries on which your recommendations are admittedly based, represents only the pre-war conditions of July, 1914.

N.P.A. to Mansfield.

Jan. 10, 1917.—The Council have carefully considered the memorandum enclosed in your letter of Dec. 31. The following are their conclusions :—

They regret their inability to vary their decision regarding the word "qualified," which must remain as a part of the definition. They also regret their inability to extend the arrangement to women journalists. In addition to the reasons already stated they consider that the effect of including women in the arrangement would be to prejudice the position of women journalists as a whole. They agree to the inclusion of the words "not less than" in the clause regarding Saturday engagements. They are not prepared to extend the arrangement to photographers. They are unable to agree to the suggested variation regarding sporting journalists. They will, however, accept the suggestion that general reporters' salaries shall be raised by annual increments of 10/6 to six guineas. As to the war bonus, they are unable to accede to the proposal that any definite percentage should be recommended.

A record of the papers affected by the N.P.A. decision is something more than a mere list. Several of the famous names have been lost in the destructive mergers of the past generation. The

papers were : *The Times, Daily Telegraph, Daily Chronicle, Daily Express, Daily News, Daily Mail, Daily Mirror, Daily Sketch, Daily Graphic, Morning Advertiser, Morning Post, Financial Times, Financial News, Sporting Life, Evening News, Star, Westminster Gazette, Evening Standard, Globe, Sunday Herald, Sunday Pictorial, Observer, Sunday Times, Lloyd's Weekly News, Sunday Dispatch, News of the World, People, Referee.* In December, 1917, *Reynolds's Newspaper*, the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Sportsman* were not members of the N.P.A., and required separate approach by the Union.

Although I was, by executive nomination, the correspondent for the Union in these exchanges, it is scarcely necessary to state that our " case," as presented from time to time, was the product of a trio of brains, assisted by many valued advisers. Veitch was invaluable both for his practical experience of Parliamentary affairs, and his innate Scottish shrewdness, while Foster, with his varied knowledge, and grasp both of broad principle and essential detail, often had the predominating voice in tactics. It was Foster's fortune to pursue two big questions left open by the N.P.A. recommendations—the remuneration of women and the photographers. Quite undeservedly we were accused by some ill-informed critics of betraying the cause of the women. On the day after the terms of the N.P.A. offer became known in Fleet Street Foster received the following wire from Marie Harrison and Gwladys Jones: "Please come to tea Nevill's Court 4 p.m. Marie and Gwladys." He knew what was in store for him, but he faced it. At the flat Marie received him ; Gwladys had been called away on an office engagement. With Marie were five or six young disciples of the women's suffrage movement, not journalists. Each in turn assailed the " bad wolf." He had " sold the pass," " surrendered the cause of womanhood to the enemy," " sacrificed a Union principle," and so on. " We have surrendered nothing," he replied. " Your case is merely postponed. We go again, soon. We have forced the door. If we had rejected the offer because it was not all we wanted we could not have gone again for a long time. As it is we have won recognition, established contact. You'll get your minimum now, in every office. In after months the N.P.A. will put it in writing. Don't worry; don't nag." The bear-baiting went on for an hour or more, and in the end the mere male, due at work at 5-30, left the party without his cup of tea.

Later Foster became the knight-errant (though a somewhat substantial one) of a chivalrous crusade. In October, 1918, he

appeared before the N.P.A. as the advocate of two concessions: (1) the payment of the minimum of £6 6s., plus war bonus, already recognised for male reporters and sub-editors, to women engaged on the same class of work; (2) the extension of the minimum and bonus to photographers. His arguments on behalf of the women really amounted to a thesis and were so convincing that one of the magnates on the other side of the table (Mr. H. T. Cadbury, a director of the *Daily News*) declared that the Union case was unanswerable. The decision came in the following terms:

Inasmuch as the Council are in full agreement that women should be granted equal pay for equal work, they have decided to recommend their members that in cases where women are performing the same services as men they should be granted similar rates of pay. The Council, however, feel it necessary to point out that, having regard to the diversity in the experience, knowledge, and duties of women journalists, it may be difficult in many cases to decide where the services rendered are of equal value. This decision will, of course, rest with the editor.

A pleasing tribute to the Union's success in vindicating the principle of equal pay was contained in a public protest made by London women journalists in 1923 to the Triangle Secretarial Offices, against a suggestion made that women should not expect the same rate as men. They pointed out that the principle of an equal minimum was upheld by the N.U.J. and agreed to by the N.P.A., and that the N.U.J., which was the leading association of working journalists in the country, had secured minima ranging from £4 7s. 6d. on the smaller country weeklies to £9 9s. on the London papers. It may not be out of place to give the names of the signatories to the protest. They were:

Mary Abbott, *Westminster Gazette*; E. M. Barton, *Daily Express*; Marguerite Cody, *Daily News*; Kathleen Courlander, *Daily Express*; Marie Harrison, *Daily Chronicle*; Edith Shackleton Heald, *Evening Standard* and *Daily Sketch*; Nora Shackleton Heald, *Daily Mail*; M. T. Hogg, *Evening Standard*; Evelyn Isitt, *Manchester Guardian*; Gwladys T. Jones, *Daily Chronicle*; Emilie H. Peacock, *Daily Express*; Philippa Preston, *Daily Chronicle*.

The continuation of the Union's campaign in Fleet Street is described in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

HIGH WIND IN FLEET STREET: "JAM FACTORY JOURNALISM."

THE fight for the photographers had to continue after the achievements already recorded. Success did not come until December, 1919, when a comprehensive agreement between the N.P.A. and the N.U.J. gave minimum rates for photographer pressmen rising from £4 4s. for improvers to £8 8s. after the seventh year of service, and for photographer printers rising from £3 3s. to £5 5s. The effort to improve the lot of staffs of the photographic agencies was to follow in time. It involved prolonged work on the part of Foster and Robertson, and of Richardson and Foster at a still later stage.

Although we had emerged with success from our first big engagement—that of December, 1917, with the N.P.A.—other important business was in progress affecting the whole country. We worked under difficulties. The incapacity of Watts was a sore trial to himself, and an element of weakness in the Union staff just when maximum efficiency was most needed. The situation was saved by the zeal of voluntary workers, who put their backs into the job. In Manchester Richardson, Haslam and others kept head office affairs going, and in London, which had become the vital centre of the wages campaign, the leaders stuck closely to their task. We issued full periodical statements of progress to the Wages Committee from my private address in West Dulwich. Two little extracts from one of these will show a portion of the many-sided business in hand:

Mansfield and Veitch to Wages Committee.

Dec. 27, 1917.

NEWSPAPER SOCIETY.—Mansfield met Brown on 18th inst. and arranged that latter should obtain data on the action of the proprietors' county federations, to submit to Wages Committee on Jan. 5, with a motion as to future policy. It will be proposed that Brown be co-opted a member of the Wages Committee for the purpose of the campaign in the counties.

We regret that, owing to the absence of Meakin in Ireland, the illness of Watts, and the great pressure of work on the London members, it has not yet been possible to draft replies to the Newspaper Society and the Newspaper Federation. If you have any points for these replies to suggest please forward at once to Mansfield at above address.

The record of the wages movement in London is running to great length, and there are big events yet to chronicle. Having shown in detail, however, how we surmounted the first obstacles, we can proceed with a little less particularity. A very large field of journalism in the Metropolis lay outside the daily newspapers covered by the 1917 compact. Working for the trade and technical press, periodicals of all kinds from the *Spectator* to *Comic Cuts*, and magazines of various types produced by the great fiction houses, were a large number of journalists, men and women, as yet unorganised, but who ought by every rule to be within the Union fold. Central London branch, pre-occupied with regular newspaper staffs, had made fitful efforts to explore this new territory, and Executive men felt that the proprietors' associations should be approached for concessions to meet the war time necessities of their staffs. In due time these special interests became the care of the important Trade and Periodical Branch of the Union, but that must be related elsewhere. Foster and Mansfield had two interviews in 1918 with the Weekly Newspaper and Periodical Proprietors' Association, Ltd., established in 1913, and at the time presided over by Sir George Riddell (later Lord Riddell), and once we were accompanied by John Dunbar, a young Scotsman who was to rise to supreme editorial direction in the house of Odhams. Then he was in the King's service, and on the deputation appeared in naval uniform. I think he was a lieutenant in H.M.S. Crystal Palace, and when asked to join us he said: "There won't be time for me to change into civvies." Foster clinched this with: "Civvies be d——d. You'll come as you are, to create a good impression. We don't often have an admiral on an N.U.J. deputation." In 1916 Dunbar was actively at work, and was appointed assistant secretary of the Central London branch, for its trade paper section. The biggest firm in the Association was the Amalgamated Press, with over forty publications, and the others included Cassells, Newnes, Pearsons, and scores of smaller publishing firms and individual papers catering for a great variety of commercial, industrial, class, religious, literary and political interests.

As was natural, with Sir G. Riddell in the chair, the deputation had a friendly and good humoured interview, and the result was that the Association recommended its members to pay as minimum salaries £6 6s. a week to editors, £5 5s. to chief sub-editors, and £4 4s. to sub-editors and reporters, after three years' experience, with a bonus of 25 per cent. on all pre-war rates up to £6 6s.

Early in 1920 the above minima were advanced to £8 8s., £7 7s. and £6 6s. respectively; and war bonuses were merged in the general increase of £2 2s. per week on existing salaries. The failure of Cassells to pay these rates led to Union activity in that famous house. Fortunately there was in existence an editorial chapel, which acted in concert with the house chapel. An economy move led to dismissals, but Sir Arthur Spurgeon, a Fellow of the Institute of Journalists, assured the President of the Union (J. E. Brown), Foster and C. P. Robertson (Executive members) and H. M. Richardson (General Secretary) at an interview, that there was no discrimination against Union men. There was some plain talk and argument on the difference between an agreement and a recommendation, but it all ended in a pledge that the firm would honour the Association's recommendations. This incident illustrates the work constantly undertaken by a vigilant Union. Concessions are won and then defaulters have to be tracked down. A smaller proprietorial body in the same field of journalism met us with cordial goodwill in the spring of 1918 and accepted our proposals. It was the British Association of Trade and Technical Journals, and the chief points agreed were: minimum for editors and editor-reporters £6 6s.; sub-editors, reporters or reporter-sub-editors £4 4s., with war bonuses. Unfortunately two years later the Association, which included first-class trade journals in London and some Manchester publications, was in another mind. When the Union asked them for a scale running up from seven guineas they replied that they had no power to make agreements, and, as regarded recommendations, they did not see the need of continuing in peace what they were glad to do in war.

The news agencies in London proved a hard nut to crack. We were determined to get the agency men placed on a footing of equality with the newspaper staffs, and it meant a struggle lasting three years to do it. As a member of several of the Union deputations concerned I recall how the managers challenged our contention that the work of their staffs was as arduous and important as that of the newspaper staffs; and how every point raised was contested obstinately. C. P. Robertson, an agency man himself, showed great staying power in these tussles, in which yeoman service was also rendered by Foster and Veitch. Sometimes the encounters were described as friendly, at others vigorous, and nearly always protracted. At the climax the interview lasted eight hours without a break, and with only a bun and a cup of

tea for sustenance! Probably the main argument advanced by the managements was that the rates paid by the newspapers for agency services made it impossible to give the salaries asked by the Union. To counter this the N.E.C. at one stage obtained details of the rates charged by the Press Association for their services, and the figures seemed surprisingly low. The P.A. is a co-operative association of newspaper owners, and the Union protested that it should make itself a model for the country both in salaries and conditions of work. There was frequently in agency staffs what is suggestively called "unrest," which in 1919 became so acute that emergency meetings of the joint staffs were held, and a ballot taken which gave 71 votes in favour of handing in notices and only 10 against. The intervention of the P. & K.T.F. was sought and immediately given, and the Union Executive expressed the view that the refusal of the Agencies to meet the Union demands would justify strike action. This strong attitude had its effect and the managers began to show reason. By stages they approached the full Union proposals and at last in 1922 the minimum of £8 8s. was conceded without qualification.

A curious circumstance marked the inception of the agreement which awarded the first agency minimum in April, 1919, and which (with a similar success for the provincial newspaper staffs working in London) completed the chain of minima for all branches of journalistic staff work throughout Great Britain. The parties to the agreement were the C.N., Ex. Tel., and L.N.A., and the N.U.J. Just after it was signed the L.N.A. was sold to the P.A., and several members of its staff of 18 or 20 found themselves out of work. For a time the P.A. had declined to negotiate with the Union in company with other agencies, but later they duly became parties to the agreement.

When its full Agencies programme had been attained the Union regarded it as in many ways its greatest achievement. It certainly had cost laborious effort, but it had special economic significance. Instead of, as in the old days, under-cutting salary rates on the newspapers by starting at almost any figure in the hope of bettering their lot later on, agency men could no longer thus keep down the general level of salaries among their colleagues. Their aim would naturally be to secure something higher than the minimum and thus promote an economic tendency all to the good for journalists. When the Fleet-Street minimum of £8 8s. was first accepted by the Agencies (though post-dated six months) the

staffs of the latter, to show their gratitude to the Union, presented to the negotiators fountain pens with which to sign the agreement (namely Foster, Robertson, Mansfield and Veitch), and contributed a substantial amount to the Watts Memorial Fund. They also gave a pen to Mr. Holmes, sec. of the P. & K.T.F., in recognition of the valuable support given by that body. My pen, still in use, has gold bands inscribed: " F.J.M. Jan. 9, 1920." About this time the Union also won the " photographers' charter," from the Proprietors' Association of Press Photographic Agencies Ltd. It conceded the £8 8s. minimum to press photographers and editorial staff. For the Union the signatories were Foster (N.E.C.), Robertson (N.E.C.) and C. S. Garment (Central London Branch). The photographers then constituted quite a large section of Union membership in London.

In the beginning of the agency minimum movement we came up against a brick wall in the refusal of the manager of the P.A. (Mr. H. C. Robbins) to meet the Union for discussion. He stoutly maintained that salaries must be discussed between management and staff, with no " outside " intervention. Afterwards he reversed his attitude, but in our initial difficulty we sought the assistance of Sir George Askwith, Chief Industrial Commissoner 1911-1919, who had done notable work in arbitration and conciliation and was raised to the peerage. In the summer of 1916 Mansfield, Foster and Robertson had a long talk with him about the P.A. problem, and at other times he gave us valuable advice on our wages procedure. An incident comes to mind of a committee meeting at St. Bride Institute (for long the headquarters of the Central London branch) when we were discussing our approach to the N.P.A. and were doubtful about the wisest course to take. Foster suggested a talk with Sir George Askwith. Doubt was raised; discussion followed. C. P. Robertson slipped out of the room. Returning in a few minutes he said " Askwith will see us." He had telephoned to Sir George's secretary. An example of quiet efficiency characteristic of Robertson. Accompanied by J. H. Harley we duly saw the Commissioner, who said he thought the N.P.A. would not refuse to see us, but if they did he would do what he could to help. He was very interested in our case.

The little episode noted recalls a similar thing but on a big scale mentioned in the biography of Walter H. Page, the distinguished American journalist and Ambassador. He and Mr. Herbert Hoover were discussing with Belgians in London

in 1918 the alarming food position in Belgium. Page said the American Government must guarantee relief, and as for the direction — "Hoover, you're It." Without replying Hoover silently left the room and on returning was asked why. "I saw by the clock that there was an hour left before the Exchange closed in New York, so I went out and cabled, buying several millions of bushels of wheat—for the Belgians, of course." Apropos the rather surprising display of the strike spirit shown by agency staffs I remember George Beer, an old agency man himself but then news editor of *The Times*, sending a note to me in the sub-editors' room asking if, in the event of an agency strike, Nujjers would do correspondence for the P.A. and the C.N. while the strike was on. Doubtless he was concerned about his news services from the country. I told Beer, who had for years been a Nujjer, that if it came to a strike the Union would fight for all it was worth. The agencies, he had heard, had asked for the support of the N.P.A. if the Union had to be fought, but the N.P.A. had "turned them down."

The Law Courts strike of 1937 was an agency affair. It was a noteworthy example of Union solidarity and a proof that Fleet-Street men were determined enough to take a bold stand when occasion demanded. The success of the Law Courts Branch, 25 members strong, was a fine piece of propaganda for the Union. The Branch had its own salaries standards, gained by Union action. In 1922 the minimum of £8 8s. a week was registered, and in 1935 a £9 9s. rate was claimed, and a satisfactory result achieved, after the branch had pressed the N.E.C. to take any steps necessary. Under the chairmanship of G. F. L. Bridgman, honorary standing counsel to the Union, the branch was 100 per cent. Union strong and after the last success they made a present to the chairman for the able and whole-hearted way in which he had conducted their business. With satisfaction I recall that in 1920, when we had lost the invaluable services of George Leach by death, I forwarded the election of Bridgman as his successor. Ever since he has rendered efficient and ungrudging service. The calls for his opinion have been many and various. Fortunately he is a journalist of wide experience as well as a lawyer, and this combination is essential in an officer on whose advice the Executive has often to rely in crucial matters. Our record of success in the Courts has not suffered at his hands. Our debt of gratitude to him was increased in 1938 when he published a useful little manual "The Pressman and the Law," which he has since kept

up-to-date by articles in the *Journalist*. In 1937 the P.A. and the Ex. Tel. were working in amalgamation so far as Law Courts reporting was concerned, and they had a joint staff of 17 reporters. To place the great event of that year on record I have secured the following brief narrative from T. G. Boyland, the secretary of the branch, whose death since it was written has unhappily to be recorded:

The strike originated with the non-reporting, for that part of the service which is supplied to the London and more important provincial press, of a lengthy action—extending over several days—about a claim under a policy of motor car insurance. "Z," a member of the P.A. staff, who was detailed to report the case, considered that it was of purely "local" interest, and sent his copy day by day for dispatch to the country newspapers in the area affected and to a London journal which deals mainly with mercantile and insurance subjects. "Z's" intention was to supply the general press with an adequate report when judgment had been given, and his attitude was known to his chiefs of staff at the Courts. The reporter is usually expected to exercise his discretion whether his copy should go to the general press, or "locals," or both. However, in a few days time, Mr. Martin, the editor-in-chief of the P.A., asked "Z" for an explanation, considering that the case should have been written for the full service every day. Not regarding the explanation as satisfactory, he gave "Z" notice to terminate his employment.

A meeting of the Law Courts branch of the Union was immediately held (June 29, 1937) and Bridgman presided. F. P. Dickinson (then the Union's President), Hunter and Betts (N.E.C.) and Bundock (acting General Secretary) attended. It was resolved that Bridgman and Bundock should seek an interview with Mr. Martin in the endeavour to persuade him to withdraw the notice given to "Z." Two days later the Branch was informed that Mr. Martin and Mr. Robbins (General Manager of the P.A.) had refused to meet the Union delegates. This was considered to raise a question of paramount importance, as it struck at one of the fundamental principles of trade unionism, i.e., the right of labour to be received by the employer. The Branch unanimously resolved: "That unless some change in the position favourable to 'Z' takes place between now and 10 a.m. next Monday (July 5) the chiefs of staff be informed that no member of the joint staff will begin work until Mr. Martin agrees to meet, on that day, the representatives of the Union and to re-open the question of 'Z's' dismissal. Further resolved, that the Branch deeply regrets that, owing to the amalgamation of staffs, they have been forced to take a course which must cause loss and annoyance to the Exchange Telegraph Company, who have always treated the members of the Branch employed by them with courtesy and consideration."

At 10 a.m. on July 5, the situation not having changed, it was resolved that the preceding resolution should be enforced and no work was done that day. For the first time on record, no reporter was in his accustomed place. This was quickly noticed: judges and barristers commented on their absence, inquired the reason and, so rumour had it, made sympathetic remarks and hoped for a speedy settlement in the reporter's favour. Tape

machines in dozens of newspaper offices were silent, except for an intimation to chief subs. that the agencies could not provide their usual services of law copy that day. In little groups the men concerned quietly paced the Central Hall, where they were joined by men from " the Street " sent in by their news editors, either to write a story, or, in one or two instances, to report cases. It is pleasant to record that, with the exception of one man, all agreed to respect the strikers' cause. They wished their agency colleagues the best of luck. Next day, just before the Courts sat, intimation was received that the deputation would be seen that afternoon, and the reporters were instructed by the Union to resume work. In the evening, another meeting of the Branch was held, at which Bridgman, Bundock, members of the N.E.C. and P.A. chapel attended. Bridgman reported that the delegation had been in conference with the chairman and vice-chairman of the P.A. Board, Mr. Martin and Mr. Wills (manager of the Ex. Tel.), and that the directors of the P.A. had agreed to suspend " Z's " notice pending reconsideration of the matter by the Committee of P.A. directors on July 27, when the representations made by the Union delegates would be favourably considered."

This was considered by the Branch to be a satisfactory achievement on the part of the Union, and votes of thanks were passed to all those who had participated in the negotiations on behalf of the men. Among them was Mr. Holmes, General Secretary of the P. & K.T.F. On July 29 Bundock reported that correspondence with the P.A. Board had ended with the notification that " Z's " notice had been withdrawn. Bundock complimented the Branch on exhibiting a splendid example of Union solidarity and loyalty to a colleague, and he was congratulated on his appointment as General Secretary of the Union, and on his skilful handling of the dispute.

The newspapers were, of course, affected by the stoppage of law reports. Bundock sent round to the chapels in the various offices warning reporters that they might be called on to take the places of agency men who were " out." This proved effective, for 16 reporters loyally observed the request at the risk of dismissal. The N.P.A. seemed anxious not to be dragged into the quarrel, and they reminded the Union that it was a condition of their agreements that their staffs should not be brought into any dispute with an outside organisation. The N.P.A. thought, perhaps with reason, that the Union had broken the undertaking given after the General Strike in 1926 that there should be no interference with managements. After a conference the Union Executive published by agreement the assurance that the N.P.A. were always ready to discuss jointly with the Union any dispute as to terms of agreements with the Union; pending a settlement in such cases there should be no interference with editorial managements. When Foster and Bundock met Sir T. McAra, of the N.P.A., it was suggested that they must order the Union chapels not to interfere

again. Obviously they could make no such promise. After something of a verbal fight they secured the assurance just noted.

To return to the main story, after their 1917 success the London executive group set about "consolidating their gains," and preparing for advance. The whole country had had its eyes on Fleet-Street, and we received many messages of congratulation and encouragement. For instance Beer, now an officer of the Italian Expeditionary Force, wrote to me from base headquarters, somewhere in the Mediterranean, in January, 1918, congratulating us on "a grand achievement." W. E. Pegg, N.E.C., wrote Foster to state that Cardiff was joining Central London in nominating Mansfield for the presidency. "Please accept my hearty congratulations on the great victory your Branch has just secured. I am glad, too, that Central London is taking an increasing share in the general affairs of the Union, in the initiation of policy and in the provision of leaders and administrators. London can do more, and we may before long call upon London to do more. The headquarters of the Union must be where the best men are to be found." Tom Jay, of Bristol, who was to become president, wrote to me expressing the view that our success was greater than that of the North, because it set up for the first time in history a minimum scale; "It must mean a great deal of work, and hard-earned leisure sacrificed by the one or two in London upon whom the burden has fallen of keeping things going. It is a pity that our members throughout the country do not fully realise all that is being done behind the scenes."

Under the 1917 settlement staffs had a "recommended" minimum of £6 6s., and a war bonus of uncertain quantity, and both had to be fought for in detail in many cases. By 1919 the cost of living had reached 120 per cent. above July, 1914, and there was undeniable claim for consideration. At the request of the Executive the London leaders continued to act for their own area, and they produced new proposals which were submitted to the N.P.A. on September 24, 1919, by a deputation composed of Foster, Mansfield, Veitch and Robertson. It was appropriate that Foster should lead, for he had prepared the draft agreement which was presented. Briefly it proposed war bonuses of a uniform 33⅓ per cent. on the £6 6s. minimum, and by consolidating them gave a new permanent minimum of £8 8s.; proposed a system of grading of staffs to secure a due proportion of men above the minimum for the more responsible work; and suggested a novelty in a "fair wage clause," which read: "In all future

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contracts for news and other editorial services, provision shall be made for the payment to editorial staffs of full Union rates, and the observance of Union conditions of labour by the news agency or other contracting employer." While it would have been unique in the newspaper industry, the principle had been adopted by the London School Board in 1889, and by the London County Council not long after. Obviously there were contentious matters in our draft, and there were critical moments in the negotiations before agreement was reached. In the vital talks behind the scenes Mr. F. J. Hillier took the leading part for the N.P.A. He had been a member of the Union until he joined the directorate of the *Daily News*, and he always tried to see the Union point of view. His death in the autumn of 1920 removed one who might have proved a friend in the stern conflict which was to mark the Union's third approach at the close of that year.

The N.P.A., after considering our draft in October, 1919, sent us their counter-proposals. The first clause began: "It is agreed between . . ." The firm stage of agreement had now been reached. But the proposed terms of agreement were sadly short of our hopes, and we prepared a new draft in reply. We dropped our grading and fair wage clause and also a minimum section for Parliamentary sketch writers, but stuck to other important points. Mr. Hillier sounded me in a private talk as to whether the Union would accept a clause as to the two-guinea bonus consolidation in wages as a recommendation and not an agreement. On this I had to consult my colleagues, and then came a meeting with the N.P.A. on December 1, when we insisted on the need of an agreement and pushed various points as far as we could. The "Memorandum of agreement" made on December 11, 1919, between the N.P.A. and the N.U.J. was signed by Lord Burnham for the former, and by Foster, Mansfield and Veitch for the latter. Certain clauses had been secured beyond the N.P.A. counter proposals, by a display of doggedness. These included a joint committee to consider "special cases" on financial and sporting papers; regulation of space work and the provision that "after three months a reporter, employed daily and regularly on space rates shall be guaranteed a minimum of £8 8s. weekly"; better terms for Saturday and special day engagements; the acceptance of our policy of "one paper, one staff," so that in the "multiple" offices no journalist should work for more than one paper or one agency for one salary, "except in cases of sickness or emergency." This qualification was inserted on the representation of Mr.

Heddle (the "Jimmy" Heddle of Union pioneer days), who as the chief of Hulton's London office had difficulties in this matter. The document appended these words: "This clause is subject to slight verbal amendment." It certainly became the subject of Union interpositions as time went on, and unfortunately was dropped when a new agreement was made in 1921. We had pressed for a four weeks holiday with pay annually, but only three weeks were conceded, with two days' leave at Christmas and one in lieu of Good Friday.

A valuable clause limited the working week to five and a half nights of seven hours each for regular night workers and five and a half days of eight hours each for day workers, the respective weekly totals being 38½ and 44 hours. Meal times were included in the hours stated. This was an approach to the standard of the five day or night week instituted by Lord Northcliffe. In the negotiations which led to the agreement we had paid regard to the interests of staff members whose salaries were above the minimum. There was a danger under the hard and fast terms of the agreement, that they would not get adequate increases in relation to the cost of living. The N.P.A., unwilling to include this matter in the agreement, appended to the document a "recommendation as to bonuses." This proposed that all salaries above the six guinea minimum should be increased by at least two guineas weekly, and the N.P.A. expressed the hope and belief that this would be done in all offices. Exceptional cases arising under this head were to be considered by a joint committee representative of the employer, the N.P.A., and the Union. In sending us the copies of the completed documents Mr. W. Leavis, for the N.P.A., assured us that he had inserted a comma in a certain line to make the meaning clear (as requested by Foster), and thus for the time all was in order.

When the 1919 agreement had just been completed Lord Northcliffe gave me an interview as the editor of the *Journalist*, in which he congratulated the Union on the success of its latest effort. "I say this," he stated, "as a warm supporter of the principles on which the Union is founded, and of many of the policies which it is pursuing. Its constitution is rightly framed and its organisation is the best instrument of progress for the working journalists of this country. The main points of the Union's programme—better pay, shorter hours and longer holidays—have my unreserved approval, but there are contentious points beyond that, in the way of restrictive conditions, which,

though they may suit some mechanical tasks, are not practicable in our profession. Subject to that limitation I cordially support your schemes of betterment and wish the Union all success." These were welcome words from the head of the largest aggregation of periodicals and newspapers in the world, and moreover one who was himself a practical journalist. It was the third occasion on which he had spoken out in our favour—the first in 1912, the Insurance year; and in 1917, when we won recognition from the N.P.A., he had declared himself with effect.

Unhappily a year later came an estrangement and a furious attack on the Union in his *Daily Mail*. The prime cause of this was obviously the Union's plan for grading staffs. That comes into the story of 1920-21, which must now be told. The first thing was to see that the agreement of 1919 was honoured, for experience taught us that some papers would try to evade it. So members were asked to be vigilant and active, and above all to start office chapels where none existed. Was the minimum being paid, the corresponding two guineas, the arrears of increase from the back date agreed, and last years' bonus; was the new hours clause being observed, etc.—these questions were pressed upon all members, and information was to be sent to Foster at 180 Fleet-Street, the Union office. Becoming thus the repository he had an almost unlimited call to action, and right well he answered it. He recovered many hundreds of pounds for members who had not received their due. This indeed understates the whole results obtained. Interviews in February and March secured advances amounting to over £3,000 a year in two offices alone on the south side of Fleet-Street, in addition to arrears due from October 1, 1919. In one office a telephone call and a visit by Mr. Holmes, of the P. & K.T.F., had a direct result. Foster with the ball at his feet played a brilliant game in the London page of the *Journalist*. His notes, full of eloquent detail of all the work in progress, did the best that could be done to incite timid and inert members to claim their rights.

One rather amusing episode occurred at an earlier date. A few of us waited formally on the representatives of the Licensed Victuallers' Society, proprietors of the *Morning Advertiser*, at the old offices at the Fleet-Street corner of Shoe Lane, which were cleared away when the *Daily Express* took the whole site. The prosaic dispute about salaries was soon disposed of and Alderman Porter who presided opened the cupboard in the board room and dispensed hospitality. The cigars were all right, but the

drinks were more potent than some at least of the Union deputation were accustomed to, and scruples had to be explained. But this did not dim the success of the interview. This story is capped by one told by James Callingham, doyen of Fleet-Street, in 1915, when he was entertained by the London Press Club on the occasion of his 80th birthday. This merry octogenarian, who had been on the staff of the *Morning Advertiser* 45 years, was still turning out copy in neat writing, and had joined the Central London Branch N.U.J. Only once in his long spell on the paper did he get into trouble. He was summoned to the office to be reprimanded by the then Governor of the Incorporated Society of Licensed Victuallers. " Hello, Callingham " was the greeting. " Have a cigar and a little refreshment." For twenty minutes they chatted pleasantly, with not a word on the ostensible business of the meeting, which concluded by the Governor remarking: " You will understand, Callingham, that you have been reprimanded! " As a corrective to the notion that journalists are a short-lived race another octogenarian may be mentioned. Matthew Pearson, still a working journalist, attended a social gathering of the Leicestershire Branch in 1936. The attainment of the jubilee of service has been noted in several cases in the *Journalist.*

After the *Daily Mirror* had cheerfully paid arrears of increase due under the N.P.A. agreement, Foster called on Mr. John Cowley to inform him that one sub-editor had not received payment. He was told that the man had left the firm's service. " But he is entitled to the increased rate for all the time he worked after the date of the agreement," Foster urged. It was a fine point, but the affable agitator came away with a £28 cheque in his pocket. A fortnight went by before he ran to earth the man named on the cheque. He found him at the card table. The beneficiary snapped out his brief thanks and added, " There's a vacant seat; come in." Foster did. That would have been a costly night for the N.U.J. if he had charged expenses. The £28 cheque man was the chief winner. Another member for whom £100 was obtained used the money to get out of journalism and become a Limehouse publican. When Foster was told he'd always be welcome if he came that way his reply was : " George, old boy! I'm sorry you are not taking the sausage shop."

An unusual incident caused a stir in Fleet-Street in September, 1920. One midnight the editorial staff and the telegraphists in the London office of the *Freeman's Journal* stopped work to enforce

their demand for the minimum to which they were entitled under the Newspaper Society agreement. The journalists' minimum was £8 8s., and the General Secretary had made repeated applications for it. Two experienced sub-editors were getting less than £5. Richardson organised the little strike, which was immediately effective in getting all the money demanded and a guarantee of "no victimisation." Although there was an "inert" element in our membership, Central London Branch as a whole at this stirring period of its history, was loyal. It had every cause to be in view of the solid advances achieved in the memorable three years, 1917-1920. When the 1919 agreement was accomplished one branch, meeting almost resolved itself into a thanksgiving service. William Colley, as F.O.C. of the newly established editorial chapel at Hulton's, moved on behalf of that body an expression of thanks to the Executive members for "their masterly and assiduous conduct of negotiations with the N.P.A. A picturesque par. in the Fleet-Street page, recorded that "the chairman fumbled with his newly acquired glasses, while Mansfield blushed furiously," as the bouquets were handed out. The writer, thinly disguised as "F," reported that "the chairman (himself) had previously made a few remarks (45 minutes), surveying the entire field of wages negotiations (in six sections), but he and F.J.M. had just enough presence of mind to mention the obvious and the urgent 'guineas for the Watts Fund' in their acknowledgment."

After painstaking preparation of proposals by the Central London and Parliamentary Branches a new comprehensive programme running to four foolscap pages of print was completed. and forwarded by C. P. Robertson in October, 1920, to the N.P.A., with a request for a meeting. It was the opening of an exciting, arduous and at times critical campaign, which lasted nearly five months before agreement was reached. It was the most fiery period in the history of Fleet-Street since the birth of the Union. with the exception of the General Strike of 1926. On November 11 Mr. (later Sir) T. W. McAra, chairman of the Technical Committee of the N.P.A., referred the memorandum back to the Union, with the request that "a new set of proposals dealing only with a revision of the minimum and conditions should be submitted." The General Secretary (Richardson) in reply, noted that the N.P.A. had not extended the courtesy of a conference before coming to a decision, and asked for the opportunity of arguing the case for the Union proposals, "all of which relate to

minimum or conditions." The N.P.A. relented, and a deputation consisting of Foster, Veitch, Mansfield, Robertson and the General Secretary met a special committee on November 25. Richardson led for the Union and the deputation retired. On their return Mr. McAra said they had decided to reject the proposals *en bloc* and advise the Council to consider only proposals dealing with the minimum and conditions of working. The deputation asked for information on the points objected to, but could only get the general reply that there was great opposition to any clauses which would in any way seem to limit the full power of the management in regulating staffs and work. The full N.P.A. endorsed this and offered to consider any fresh proposals within the limits defined.

The Union Executive on November 27 resolved that the treatment accorded by the N.P.A. was not consistent with the status of the Union, nor with that of individual members as journalists; and that the demands be re-affirmed and pressed at once. It was also decided to report the matter to the P. & K.T.F. On December 4 a joint meeting of the Central London and Parliamentary Branches was held at the St. Bride Institute, and the attendance was so large that a bigger hall had to be obtained. The Chairman (Foster) detected two sections in the meeting, aggressive and moderating, with just a few, perhaps, who had got "cold feet." He advised that indignation should not be allowed to carry members away and asked for business-like consideration. Colley, as representing Hulton's chapel, moved that only two demands should be made—a flat all-round increase of £3 3s. (making the minimum £11 11s.) and a four weeks holiday. An amendment, proposed by George Thomas, that the N.P.A. be asked to re-open negotiations, and if they refused a strike ballot be taken, was defeated, but only by a small majority. It was decided to consider revised proposals at once, after a vote in favour of "eliminating all subjects which touch on managerial policy," and re-casting the programme with a view to simplicity. The Executive was given a free hand on the question of a higher minimum, but the meeting favoured the dropping of grading. Fleet-Street went down in the estimation of some at this time, because when tested it wavered. Others approved the discretion shown, as the better part of valour.

The original programme, which had to be simplified, comprised 35 clauses, drafted with the best method and precision of phrasing that we could command. Looking at the document now,

formidable in its framework and proportions, it does seem, to be candid, something like the by-laws of a Fleet-Street Utopia. But its authors were very zealous and earnest and sacrificed portions of it with a pang. The chief thing forfeited was the grading of staffs. There were various changes in the salary proposals during the prolonged negotiations; the draft I now have suggested a minimum of £10 10s., but provided that at least two-fifths of the staffs should have not less than £14 14s., and two-fifths not less than £12 12s. It was even stated how the proportion should work—"at least two-fifths" meant one in a staff of one, two, three or four, two in a staff of five, six or seven, and so on up to eight in a staff of 20, 21 or 22. For press photographers the minimum was £10 10s., but at least 50 per cent. of the staff were to have not less than £12 12s. Strict proportions of "juniors" were prescribed, though at one previous conference with the N.P.A. Lord Burnham had declared "we do not employ juniors"—a significant phrase remembered in later arguments. During holidays relief men were to be appointed. Vacancies were to be notified to the Union and preference to be given to members of the N.U.J. "where qualifications and fitness are satisfactory." There was a proviso against the employment of non-journalists; all reports from outside concerning a trade or labour dispute should have the source "clearly indicated to the reading public"; and publicity articles about goods should appear only in advertisement columns, at the usual charge. All this was a fairly strong dose of "management," and the feeling prevailed that pruning must be done.

On the point of most substance, the grading of staffs, it mattered little that the Institute (with its window-dressing schedules and no agreements) had classified staffs into "responsible," "experienced" and "qualified," each with its own salaries, and papers into grades A, B and C. A valued member of the Central London Committee, now one of London's editors, expressed the outright belief that the agreement would not be acceptable to the N.P.A. in any form. He wrote me, when I asked him for an alternative scheme, saying that the minimum should be £9 9s., with an increase of £2 2s. to all receiving more than that figure. The two-fifths grading scheme was "impracticable and impossible to work satisfactorily in view of different conditions prevailing in various offices." With deadly candour he wrote: "What I am most anxious about is that the Union representatives shall not cut a poor figure before the N.P.A., and if I may say so without

being rude I thought that neither you nor Richardson seemed to have a very cogent idea as to how this grading scheme is going to be worked." It was in vain to protest that the draft simply attempted to put into scientific form what really existed in the best offices—the allotment of work according to capacity—and to secure the appropriate money recognition of the differentiation already in practice. We had to console ourselves with the reflection that we were a bit in advance of our time. There was widespread regret at the abandonment of grading, and some of us chuckled quietly when the 1923 A.D.M. declared for a grading scheme for senior members " as soon as possible."

On December 3, 1920, the day before the great St. Bride rally, the *Daily Mail*, in its first leader, evidently aimed at splitting the Union, said that some of the " young and ardent spirits of the N.U.J." had launched demands " that would render the position of almost every morning and evening newspaper in London financially impossible." Other demands, it said: " suggested interference with the conduct of newspapers. The reply of the *Daily Mail* to these demands, if pressed, will be a reluctant but complete ' shut down.' " Probably this attack awakened Union members to the reality of the fight that was on, and sharpened the cleavage of opinion at the meeting on December 4. On December 6 the *Mail* gave a big "top" to the meeting, with the headings: " Jam Factory Journalism.—Extremists outvoted—Many demands dropped—No grading of staffs." In support of the top line it was stated that many journalists thought the demands " would introduce a grading system better suited to a jam factory than to editorial staffs of newspapers." The first leader said that the system was " suitable to a jam factory or any kind of standardised manual repetition work." The Union was represented as running amok at the dictation of a minority. " It would be well," they said, " to strengthen this new organisation of Pressmen by the names of one or two people who have done something in journalism."

An effective reply by Richardson, running to nearly a column, was published by the *Mail*. After saying that Union gratitude to Lord Northcliffe for past encouragement would not be dissipated by the present cold douche, he presented facts to show the rationale of the Union's proposals, the real basis of grading, and how the *Mail* itself was putting many Union plans into practice. As to Union personnel he neatly remarked that a great many of the *Mail* staff were members. The editor, in a footnote, said that

the suggestion as to Union membership referred to the administrators: "We are unaware of the presence of any journalists of national distinction among its ruling spirits." A lively little retort to the footnote was sent by Richardson but was not published in the *Mail*. Although trade union officials and administrators were not as a rule men who were so self-centred that they made either fortunes or careers out of their craft, he was able to point to some men of national reputation as journalists on our Executive.

Some support for the critics of the Union came from Mr. Robert Donald (a managing director) and the Rev. W. Robertson Nicoll in the *British Weekly*. The latter was for a time a member of the N.U.J. but resigned. It was with dismay, he wrote, that he read in the *Daily Mail* "the extremist demands of a certain section of the Union." This was the parrot cry of the ill-informed critic; and I suspect that Robertson Nicoll had no real understanding of trade unionism, either of its principles or policies. The jam factory pasquinade may have added a little to the gaiety of Fleet-Street; it certainly incited the alarms of a tense and testing time for the Union. There was a witty *riposte* in the *Journalist* by "One of the pip-makers": "So we are jam-factory journalists, are we? Five thousand of us. The rest are those who have done something—or somebody—in journalism . . . Carmelite House will not live by standard bread alone—there's jam . . . How many £2,000 or £3,000 a year men have got the 'wind up'? Do they fear that *their* salaries may be reduced if others get jam-factory justice? 'Nothing like it since Eatanswill,' said an equally undistinguished colleague of mine, as he put the paper to press . . . Have you seen the Institute's demands? Grading? Rather! Ten, fourteen and eighteen guineas! More jam-factory Bolshevism."

Genuine surprise and regret were felt throughout our membership that Lord Northcliffe should permit such an outbreak of hostility to the Union on the part of the *Daily Mail*. He was a journalist, an individualist, a man of boldly independent proclivities. In justice to his consistency it has to be remembered that, while favouring good pay and holidays for his staffs, he always uttered a warning against the introduction of working conditions unsuitable to journalism, and against interference with the management of papers. The proposals on these latter points were much misrepresented; they were the red rag to the Carmelite bull. In 1922 Northcliffe did much to retrieve his credit with trade unionists by his refusal to be a party to the reduction of printers'

wages in Fleet-Street. On that issue he withdrew from the N.P.A., and furnished a first-class sensation by the publication of his famous pamphlet entitled " Newspapers and their Millionaires, with some further meditations about us." His main point on the wages question is worth recalling. That question in metropolitan daily paper offices in no way resembled the wages position in agriculture, engineering and the other great industries, because the papers were controlled by a number of very rich people who merely competed with each other and not with foreigners. Good wages for printers of daily newspapers did not mean loss of trade to Great Britain, but low wages meant the disappearance of skilled British printers to the United States. Northcliffe took pride in his qualification as a journalist to control his papers, and in his pamphlet refused to accept the dictation of a " Shipping King, a Cotton-Waste King, Coal Kings, an Oil King and the rest of them," whom he found behind the London dailies.

All this created a *furore* in newspaperland. Sir William Berry (now Lord Camrose), in a public speech, paid a tribute to Lord Northcliffe as a journalist who had led the world, but made the expected reservation in these words : " I do not think in his recent criticism he has been fair to his fellow proprietors. After all there is ' the mysterious Mr. Fish ' (about that time news-editor of the *Daily Mail*). He is a very earnest and enthusiastic gentleman regarding the proposals and reforms he brought forward, and we have to remember that he is the Mr. Fish, acting on behalf of Lord Northcliffe's organisation, who proposed that the proprietors should negotiate with the unions. I have to remember also that five out of the eight unions consented to a reduction, and it follows, therefore, that the proprietors as a whole, acting as the N.P.A., could have no very selfish motive in proposing the readjustment of the terms of the men." The stand resolutely maintained by Northcliffe that " there is no case for a reduction in the wages of our daily printers, and as regards what are called the Northcliffe journals there will be none," saved the position for the unions, and there was no wage cut either for printers or journalists. A few months later Lord Northcliffe died, and there were some who hinted that his action was an exhibition of quixotry due to the malady which had him in its grip. A kindlier, and perhaps a truer view, was that it was a manifestation of the real man.

To return to the arena, and the joust between N.P.A. and N.U.J., the decision of the meeting of December 4 to simplify the

demands was promptly acted upon, and new proposals were sent to the N.P.A. The main points were as follows: minimum salary £11 11s.; general increase of £3 3s. for all members of editorial staffs; £3 3s. per day for special day engagements for Sunday journals, with overtime 7/6d. per hour after seven hours duty; present hours of work unchanged, but overtime to be paid where, at the end of a calendar month, compensating time-off has not been given; holidays four weeks annually and extra days at certain seasons; for Parliamentary work the minimum and general increase and rates for extra turns and late work specified. with a working week of five days; better rates and conditions for space workers, free lance photographers and photographic printers; one paper, one staff; period of notice to be recognised, three months for reporters, sub-editors, artists and press photographers; employers to notify vacancies to Union; a joint committee to deal with questions arising out of agreement.

The situation took an ugly turn at the opening of the New Year, 1921. The N.P.A. had sent counter-proposals to the above, which were disappointing, and had not invited the Union to a discussion. Briefly the N.P.A. offered an increase of only one guinea on existing £8 8s. minimum, and that after four years service instead of two; no increase for higher paid members except on merit, at the discretion of the employer; no increases at all for sporting and financial papers, for press photographers or auxiliary workers; and none on free lance rates, nor on Gallery extra turns or committee work. They dropped the "one paper, one staff" clause which, it will be remembered, was to be "subject to slight verbal amendment." They declined to recognise and pay for overtime. The Union asked for a conference and met an *ad hoc* committee of the N.P.A. Finding that the proprietors would not budge the Union came down to a claim for a £10 10s. minimum after three years' service and a four-weeks holiday, but all concession was refused, except in phraseology, and the conference adjourned. On January 14 the N.P.A. wrote conveying the decision that the granting of any increase on the higher salaries on account of merit "should, as heretofore, be left to the discretion of the employer." The letter added: "The opinion is strongly held that the nine and eight guineas are fair and reasonable minima for the present-day conditions of working. You understand, I think, that the increase of minimum is conditional on the acceptance of a new agreement as submitted herewith." This

enclosure was the draft of counter-proposals already outlined, with some minor alterations.

The Union replied that this would leave their members at a disadvantage in comparison with the existing agreement and that a meeting would be held to consider the position. It added that the negotiating committee could not recommend acceptance of the proposals, but that if the extra guinea were made applicable to photographers and financial and sporting paper staffs there might be less reluctance to accept the offer. On January 25 the N.P.A. wrote that representatives of the sporting and financial papers on that body were firmly opposed to an increase in the minimum. With regard to the desire that the whole of the clauses of the existing agreement should remain, the letter said: " In the view of the committee (of the N.P.A.) the clauses in the existing agreement which do not find a place in the present agreement (meaning draft) are either irrelevant, of a temporary character, or are covered by clauses in the draft agreement which has been submitted."

With this " take it or leave it " attitude of the employers things were approaching, if they had not already reached, a deadlock. A mass meeting of the Central London and Parliamentary Branches was held in the Memorial Hall on January 29, when Foster presided over an attendance of about 400. He revealed that a lot of intrigue was going on behind the scenes, " string-pulling " by proprietors and chiefs, and that certain sections of the Union membership (chiefly in Carmelite House) had been led to declare that they would not strike. The N.P.A. was trading on this weakness. Foster made a moving appeal for Union loyalty and for a demonstration of the manhood of Fleet-Street. The meeting, with only two dissentients, resolved to inform the N.P.A. that " their offer is totally unsatisfactory, inadequate and inequitable, and cannot be accepted." After discussion of many details a resolution was carried instructing the Executive " in the event of failing to reach a satisfactory settlement in conjunction with the P. & K.T.F., to take a ballot of members on the advisability of withdrawing their labour." When the chairman declared it carried, with but six dissentients, the assembly stood and cheered for several minutes, and a motion of confidence in the negotiating chairman was carried by acclamation. It was a demonstration unprecedented in the annals of Fleet-Street. The resolutions were communicated to the N.P.A., with details of the main grounds of complaint against their proposals. The N.P.A.

replied that they could not alter their decision, but would be glad to meet the negotiating committee again to give any further explanation as to the reasons for their attitude. As this seemed to open up no new prospect of settlement no action was taken.

So it ended. The Union found no practical alternative to acceptance of the terms offered and on March 16, 1921, the agreement was completed. For over 20 years it has stood as the working charter of Fleet-Street. Foster, the disappointed idealist, but the undaunted artificer of a better future, refused to sign it; said he "felt ashamed of it," and was "not proud of Fleet-Street." His colleagues, on the principle that half a loaf was better than no bread, took pen in hand and signed. After all it raised the minimum for most by a guinea a week and proved a defence against the wage-reduction movement which soon faced the trade unions of the country, while it had been secured when conditions in the industrial world were unfavourable to the raising of the economic conditions of the workers. Writing of these events in 1928 in the last chapter of his history, Richardson said:

> Alas the N.P.A. had the advantage of an economic position. Just about that time the *Globe* closed down; many papers were economising in all sorts of ways to make up for the high cost of newsprint. Many members left the Union. The N.E.C. decided that, as the offer of the N.P.A. meant an increase of a guinea, and as the circumstances were not favourable to pressing for the full Union programme, the offer should be accepted. . . . On the whole it may fairly be said that the N.E.C. was wise to accept the compromise rather than go to extremes to force the acceptance of the ambitious programme that had at first been put forward. At that time the cost of living was about 160 above the July, 1914, rate. Since then the cost has gradually fallen, without any consequential fall in our rates.

A new generation has arisen but our chief negotiator of those brave old days lives—his outlook informed by the constructive teachings of Sidney Webb—to expound the vital need of Union solidarity, the development of the chapels organisation, and the tempering of weapons against the day when the reveille shall sound once again.

CHAPTER XIII.

PROGRESS IN THE PROVINCES: NATIONAL ARBITRATION.

THE Great War fell like an avalanche upon journalism. For a time the effect on our work, our wages and our whole outlook was dark and bewildering. One of the first reactions among the proprietors was to reduce wages and curtail staffs, in spite of the depletion caused by the rush to the colours of hundreds of patriotic men. The Union did its best to stem the tide of misfortune; as time passed we fought, with growing success, for the restoration of wages to the old level (bad as it was); we strove to combat the unfair measures imposed in periods of panic, to relieve the hard lot of overworked staffs and meet the needs of the unemployed. All this involved a financial strain, but the membership had, as always when the need is shown, loyally sanctioned a special levy. Owing to the unexpectedly large number of enlistments the problem was not so acute as some had predicted, and amid all the severe trials the enforced concentration of Union energy on the vital questions of wages and conditions was a development of excellent promise for the future. Looking beyond the immediate evils of war, hopeful spirits shared the faith of Tennyson:

> Oh yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill.

By the end of 1915 the restoration of wages to the pre-war level had been largely accomplished, repayments of deductions secured, and advances made here and there on pre-war standards. In December a wage conference representative of Southern branches was held in London. Delegates attended from fifteen branches, stretching from the Dover Patrol to Banbury Cross. There had been difficulties in Surrey, with complaints from the North that there was too much flirting with the Institute there. At that time more than one Union branch official there was a member of the Institute. J. E. Brown promised an exposure of certain proprietorial tactics, based upon his discovery of a letter sent out to the tribunals (which dealt with questions of reserved labour and recruitment for the forces) by the Surrey Newspaper Association

on the subject of co-operation of reporting staffs. Be it remembered that Brown was the aggressive secretary of the P. & O. (Propaganda and Organisation) Committee, he came as near to ubiquity as mortal man could in his Union itineraries, and knew better than most how to stir the apathetic to action. The conference urged branches to take definite steps without delay to secure salary increases to meet the high cost of living, the procedure suggested being applications to employers either by staffs or by the Union executive, as thought best. Further, branches were called on to prepare minimum scales of wages for their own areas to enable the executive to produce a comprehensive schedule for the various grades of journalists throughout the country.

Here was a permanent policy emerging from a temporary crisis. Meakin carried the delegates with him in a sound speech, enforcing the point that the wages question was the one great test of the kind of organisation needed by working journalists. Foster (Central London) was the chairman, and as Watts could not attend I had to deputise for him. Reporting to him in a letter written in an interval somewhere about dawn, I said:

The conference elicited much useful discussion and infused ginger quite effectively. The open meeting was attended by about 80 and had an excellent ring. Meakin spoke well and was followed with great interest. I did my best to stop gap for you and *entre nous* am told that I was not altogether unsuccessful in one or two sentimental touches *a la* Watts. However that is not for me to say. I am convinced that we should go ahead with our propaganda in London. We are on top of the Institute now and must remain so. Veitch suggests to me that we should challenge the Institute to debate. It would get a big crowd and we ought to wipe the floor with them. I pass no opinion on the suggestion, knowing I am on delicate ground and seeing the objections that could be taken—(6-30 a.m. Foster has just blown in and interrupted my flow of thought).

The year 1917 proved to be one of the most vital years in Union history—strenuous effort and definite success. For those of us who had to lead it was a time of ceaseless toil night and day, long journeys, endless meetings and the tax of constant speaking. But we realised that big events were shaping and that the Union was on the verge of realising some at any rate of its dreams. How we had to move in those days, now a generation ago, comes back to mind on reading letters still preserved. Here is a sample of Brown the hustler. He wrote me on January 9, 1917, stating that the whole of the staff of the *Sussex Daily News*, Brighton, numbering 24, had signed a memorial for an increase of wages. The firm replied to one that since the war started he had had an increase of 2/-! "If the outlook of the company becomes more favourable we shall then be pleased to re-consider your present

application." The staff asked for a meeting, and Brown saw the opportunity of propaganda, for some were non-Union men. It had to be on a Saturday, when we were already booked for a meeting of the London and Home Counties District Council in the afternoon. So Brown worked out a time-table as follows:— London Council, 2-30 p.m.; catch train at Victoria 5-10, reach Brighton 6-57; propaganda meeting, Brighton 7 p.m.; meet *S.D.N.* staff at 9 p.m. to discuss position and decide action; leave Brighton for London by 11-5 p.m. train. Quite a nice little Saturday outing, but not the most exacting some of us had to experience while in Union office. Ernest Williams (the ex-president), who was active in the North, wrote to Watts: "Regarding the *Sussex Daily News* I suppose we could safely tell Brown and Mansfield to urge our members to go forward on the understanding that the Union will see they do not suffer by the consequences." Watts stated that he had discussed the position with Meakin, and they agreed that the hint could be conveyed to trustworthy men that if needs be an effort could be made to get them away to better jobs. If this were done it would probably improve the position of the staff who remained. This had certainly been the experience at Portsmouth and Chester, and also in West Surrey. "I need hardly say," added Watts, "that whatever suggestions Mansfield and yourself (Brown) care to make would be adopted by the Executive."

Brown was really a good detective and the information he collected on many points was valuable for propaganda purposes and also for tactics in the wages campaign, for fighting was still in the open guerrilla stage. He had his own sources of information and got to know what was going on behind the proprietorial scenes. Once he wrote me to say that he had sent out about 35 letters making inquiries about the doings of the county Associations of proprietors re the Union demand—some affiliated to the Newspaper Society and some not. He gave us the "tip" of a meeting of five or six of the societies in the Home Counties in London to consider forming a federated group, which Mr. Bird (secretary of the Newspaper Society) was to [illegible] Hampshire and Isle of Wight Newspaper Society [illegible] can learn have not in any way considered wages. Once or twice in his presidential year Martin came South to confabulate, and much against the grain I was obliged to consent to meetings on Sundays, as our Saturdays were invariably full of branch activities in or around London. Late in 1917 [illegible]

join him in a propaganda jaunt to Gravesend, and he added the interesting information: "The Surrey Newspaper Proprietors' Association on Monday decided on a 20 per cent. bonus on pre-war rates and started paying same to-day. I have written Watts fully on the matter. I think it is a dodge to get out of meeting the Union or negotiating with us through the N.S. Other county Associations are being asked to do likewise."

The hardships which pressed upon our members with increasing severity as the year 1917 wore on forced the Executive to adopt a bolder, and a different, wage policy. The cost of living was mounting and in many places salaries were allowed to remain at their old low level. Many members found the financial strain intolerable and called for drastic action. But the N.E.C. declared themselves still unconvinced that a reasonable appeal to the fairness of organised employers would fail to secure a radical improvement. The policy of sectional and individual approach to firms had suited the uncertain conditions hitherto prevailing in the newspaper world. Some papers paid well, others less well, and others again failed entirely to meet the needs of their staffs. But the position had been altered by a general increase in the price of papers, and the weekly and small evening papers, which had paid very low wages, received a marked benefit from this increase. This justified a claim by the Union for an all-round increase which would have been more difficult to sustain, say two years before. Therefore, at the end of August, 1917, an application was made to the various associations and federations representing the proprietors of the whole of Great Britain, for a general increase of salaries, graded in this way: for those receiving 30/- or less, a rise of £1 a week; 30/- to 40/-, 17/6d.; 40/- to 55/-, 15/-; 55/- to 80/-, 12/6d.; 80/- to 100/-, 10/-; over £5, 7/6d. As a matter of all-round fairness the wages to be taken as the basis were those paid in July, 1914. Thus proprietors who had increased wages to meet wartime needs would not be penalised by a general advance.

The fact that the proprietors had not yet consolidated their organisations made the Union's problem more difficult. The Newspaper Federation stood for the daily papers of the North and Midlands, and for a rather indeterminate body of weekly papers; the Newspaper Society represented most of the weeklies in England; the Southern Federation negotiated for the dailies of the South; the Scottish Federation acted for certain papers across the border; and in addition to these there were some

loosely-organised local bodies. Thus the Union had to carry on negotiations with all these associations separately and simultaneously, there being no other way of achieving collective bargaining throughout the kingdom.

The first proprietorial body to respond was the Newspaper Federation, who wrote that they were prepared to view the matter sympathetically and to receive a deputation to discuss it. At last we had won "recognition," and it was with a sense of jubilation that I travelled North on October 15, 1917, to meet the Federation with my colleagues of the Special Wages Committee. With the hard-headed men of Lancashire and Yorkshire we had a business-like interview. Mr. J. R. Scott, of the *Manchester Guardian*, was a courteous and fair chairman. Evidently our presentation of the case was convincing, for the Federation came to a swift decision. Five days after the meeting they wrote us stating that "owing to the increased cost of all commodities of daily use," they had decided to recommend their members who were proprietors of daily papers that a war bonus be paid to all members of their editorial staffs over the age of 21 on the following scale, on the wages paid on June 30, 1914: up to 25/- a week salary, bonus £1; 35/-, 17/6d.; 45/-, 15/-; 55/-, 12/6d.; 65/-, 10/-; 75/- and upwards 7/6d. Soon after the Federation decided to withdraw the words "and upwards." The Union appealed against this and pointed out the unfair result, i.e., a man with 75/- salary would get 82/6d., whereas a man with 80/- would remain at that figure. The Union also asked for the establishment of a small joint committee to deal with special cases. Unfortunately the Federation did not adopt either suggestion, so there proved to be a limit to the extent of our "recognition."

The substance of our statement to the Federation is worth giving here as a picture of the state of the newspaper world three years after the outbreak of war:

Although the cost of living adds weight and emphasis to our application, the claim is also made on the general ground that before the war the salaries of the large majority of working journalists were so low as to be a reproach to a calling which fills such a distinguished place in public life. During the past three years the salaries of some of our members have been substantially increased. In a still greater number of cases small increases have been given, but relatively the financial position of the men concerned is very much worse than it was in July, 1914. In still other cases no increase has been given so far as we are aware, and as most members in this last category were very badly paid even under pre-war conditions, their situation during the past eighteen months particularly has been really tragical. The Federation would have been approached two or three years ago but for the war. Different papers were affected in different degrees, and while some continued to do fairly well others were seriously

hit. The Executive was strongly pressed by branches all over the country to start a national movement, but after careful consideration of the whole circumstances it was decided to advise branches and staffs for the time being to approach individual employers. The situation has been radically changed by the measures which most newspaper proprietors have taken to meet the increased cost of paper, etc. In view of this changed situation the Union felt justified in submitting this application.

It is the first time that the Federation has been asked on behalf of journalists corporately to deal with the wages question, and the Executive think they have good reasons for confidence that the principle of collective bargaining will be admitted. The principle has been long admitted and acted upon in connection with compositors' wages, and although no flat rate exists in journalism, or is likely to be in the future, salaries fall into fairly well-defined classes, and, we believe, can be treated without difficulty in the manner we suggest in the application. The Union has on several occasions co-operated with federated proprietors, notably in the effort to prevent an exorbitant increase in the press telegram rates, and the Executive are convinced that collective action on wages will prove as beneficial to proprietors as to journalistic staffs. Another reason is that the whole trend of things is in the direction of settling wages and conditions by bodies representing employers and workers, and what nearly every newspaper now advocates (take the articles on the Whitley Committee proposals as an example) cannot logically be refused to newspaper staffs.

Some of our branches have urged that larger increases should be asked for. We hold strongly that even under the circumstances of pre-war days men who perform the responsible duties of journalism, even as reporters on weekly papers, could not be said to be overpaid if they received a wage of 50/- a week. With the cost of living at its present height, and the price of various commodities still rising, a wage of 50/- now is equal in purchasing power to only about 28/- or 29/- before the war, and although some prices will fall when peace is restored no one believes that they will come down to anything near the old amounts. Men who get anything between 30/- and £3 now feel the strain more acutely than those whose salaries are higher (although higher salaried men are seriously affected) because a larger proportion of a small income must be spent on absolute necessaries, which have gone up over a hundred per cent. That is one reason why we have submitted a sliding scale of increases. Another is that all who have gone into the question of journalists' wages have come to the conclusion that a levelling up is urgently needed.

Changes which were perceptible before the war have been greatly accelerated during the past three years. Notwithstanding the limitations imposed by the censorship, and the widespread distrust of what is "in the papers," due to the censorship, journalism has advanced to a more important place in the eyes of the governing classes than has ever been acknowledged before. The attitude of the Government and of State departments towards the Press has undergone profound modification, and as the effect of that change spreads downwards to all kinds of official, commercial, and industrial bodies, the journalist will inevitably come to occupy a more definite place in public life than he has done in the past. Moreover, the growing complexity of his work (which explained an increasing number of cases of nervous breakdown before the war) is becoming more and more marked, and when all the after-the-war questions crowd upon us it will tax the physical and mental capacity of any journalist to keep in close touch with the multitude of subjects he will have to try to deal with intelligently. Greater skill and concentration are needed and ought to be paid for accordingly. It is more than ever necessary, if a man is to be able to do really good work for his paper, that he should have means to buy books and certain periodical literature. At present many journalists can hardly keep their homes going and maintain the appearance which their public work calls for. After the war newspapers will have to cater for readers who are better educated and far more critical than the old,

because they have been thrust out of the commonplace grooves of life. They are somewhat contemptuous of newspapers nowadays, and the confidence of this highly critical public will have to be regained when restored freedom of the Press brings back full scope for initiative and enterprise. Only by the work of the journalists will it be possible to regain this confidence, and the best work never has been, and never will be, done by discontented staffs, or by men who are preoccupied with the problem of making ends meet.

We are sure you will admit that if journalism is to be the honourable and dignified calling which its public functions demand that it shall be, its monetary rewards must be greater than they have been in the past. At present the wages of most provincial journalists compare badly with rates of pay of many artisans. In some newspaper offices the standard rates of the compositors are actually shillings a week higher than the wages of the reporters who produce the copy they set up, including special articles and commentary or gossip notes. It does not reflect credit on the newspaper industry that two years ago 24 per cent. of our members received under 35/- a week, and that 56 per cent. received under 45/-. When this inquiry and analysis were made a large proportion of the younger and lowest paid members were already in the Army, so that the figures are really worse than they appear. The salaries of many of these members have been only slightly increased since the inquiry was made. On the other hand in some cases newly appointed colleagues have been taken on at salaries considerably greater than those which were paid to the enlisted men whose places they have taken.

The deputation pointed out that the method of applications to individual firms had been given a full trial over a period of two years, with results which were both unsatisfactory to our members and unfair to many employers, because the concessions were so unequal.

The Union did not admit that linage should be considered in relation to wages. The cases in which the wage was based on the fact that additional income might be earned were very few. A large number of our members had no linage at all. It was presumed that an employer would expect and receive adequate service, and that linage was a matter for the spare time of the man who did it. When wages were reduced in hundreds of offices at the beginning of the War the decreases were general and uniform. No account was taken as to whether a man had linage earnings or not. The same principle should apply to increases. So unsatisfactory was the position of many of our members that the Executive was constantly asked to make grants to relieve distress. Since 1912 £1,356 had been paid in this way mainly to men in employment. These grants had no connection with our Unemployment payments which since 1912 had cost the Union £4,000. Distress among soldier members and their families was relieved from a special fund. Of our 3,400 members, roughly 1,300 were in H. M. Forces.

December, 1917, was a month both of triumph and perplexity. In London we had advanced; there had been success with the Northern dailies, but the weekly papers throughout the country proved a perplexing problem. Yet they were the part of our membership most in need of help. A little hitch in the Federation concession threw light on the rather loose methods prevailing in the proprietors' ranks. Writing from Sheffield on November 2, 1917, Martin told me that the bonuses were not yet being paid, as the scheme had not yet been formally passed, and it seemed that Mr. Bird, the secretary, had not pleased a good many by sending the decision to the Union before it had been confirmed

by the full Federation meeting. This action did more credit to his heart than his head, and knowing Mr. Bird as I did by personal contact, I was not surprised that his sympathy with our men led him to communicate the good news at once on the reasonable assumption that confirmation was only a formality. Watts from his sick bed in Manchester kept in close touch with events. On December 23, 1917, he wrote:

Dear Mansfield, I almost despair of doing much in the provinces except with the aid of a big stick. I feel very strongly that unless we have been able to do something substantial for the weekly men and those in the area of the Southern Federation before January 5, the N.E.C. will come in for a severe drubbing, unless they are prepared to give a lead for drastic action. I am just afraid we shall have a revolt in the Union unless the N.E.C. are prepared to show a bold front. I write more or less personally because of what your position will be after Easter (i.e., my succession to the presidency). I would like to think that between now and Easter we could convince newspaper proprietors as a whole of the reasonableness of our claims, but I cannot.

If the proprietors had their internal weakness, so had the Union. We were struggling with a difficult situation in our campaign, and perforce losing time by having to secure cohesion among widely separated units of control. In August Martin wrote me:

The increased unrest throughout the Union has convinced me that we shall not be acting wisely to delay a week longer than necessary in making an advance towards the proprietors in a corporate capacity. The schedules compilation cannot be completed for some time, and if we miss the present position, when the labour market is so greatly in our favour, we shall probably never have such an opportunity of obtaining corporate recognition and action . . . Quite a number of branches are on the verge of pressing to extremes their staff applications, evidently thinking they will have no difficulty in obtaining "sits."

Meanwhile Meakin, who had transferred to Fleet-Street, and was engaged on a journalistic assignment in Dublin, kept in touch by post with Watts in Manchester, with the President in Sheffield, and with us in London. He had carried his mass of statistics with him into exile, and there analysed them and prepared positive proposals. He also put his finger very firmly on the weak spot in the union machine. Thus a letter from Dublin to Martin, dated December 6, 1917:

I knew we were in for difficulties, but hardly expected such an avalanche of census forms and correspondence. However difficulties are only created to be surmounted, and we aren't baffled yet. First about an exceedingly important matter. (1) It is vitally necessary that we should have a full-time secretary without delay; (2) a good salary should be offered, to attract the best brains we have. Watts is the man we want to attract. I had a long talk with Mansfield and Foster just before I left London and I think they agree with me. Veitch may have qualms over the financial aspect, but I will deal with that. Recently I asked Watts what his position was. He told me his doctor had presented an ultimatum. He must give up one of his jobs. His office prospects were attractive,

but his inclinations were towards the Union. But salary was of course important and I gathered that nothing less than £450 or £500 a year would compensate him for the loss of office prospects. That was the salary I had convinced myself would be necessary to get a man who will be able to play the big part he will be expected to play . . . It is obvious that the wages and other big Union movements will suffer unless there is the day-to-day driving force which can only be applied by a full-time secretary who has no other pre-occupations. The difficulties are big enough to engage the whole thought of any one man, as well as the care of a committee. The achievements possible are so big that nothing ought to be left to chance. As you know it has been almost impossible on one or two very important occasions to fulfil appointments to negotiate with employers. Generally branches need more oversight and without in the least disparaging Brown's most excellent and fruitful work, this and propaganda effort would be more effectively done by one who had all the strings in his hands and was in constant hourly contact with the work.

Economy in the narrow sense may, and I am sure would, be so far as Union development is concerned, a costly policy. We have to think not alone of the moment, or of next year's war balance sheet, but of the next ten years. Given the right kind of energetic direction at the head, I believe that a keen membership of 5,000 is possible, that arrears can be kept down, that true economy in the details of administration can be secured, and that the expenditure on secretary's salary would in a few years be a very productive investment. . . On the other hand if we try to get along on half voluntary lines, and if our movements do not succeed as they ought to do because the last ounce of driving power is missing, the result will be disastrous to the Union. If a Whitley Committee is set up the work of the secretary will be both heavy and most important for several years at any rate. . . It is quite certain that we cannot get along for another year on the present system. Watts cannot conceivably carry on both his jobs. I cannot do justice to my own work and to the wages movement as well. The vista of strenuous times which our latest offensive has opened out is too clear for me to entertain any doubts about that. The drudgery of writing scores and scores of long letters during the last few weeks is something I couldn't stand very long.

In letters from Dublin to myself Meakin filled in his picture of a strong Union after the War with a membership of 5,000: " if we are really strong at the head. As for Watts, his experience is invaluable. You know his capacity in the conference room. On the personal and sentimental side, he has given his best years and sacrificed his health by his double harness work for the Union." No appeal to me was necessary, for I was already an advocate of a full time official, and was destined to see the appointment during my presidency in the ensuing year.

Three precious months in the hard fight for the weekly men were wasted by the delays of the proprietors. On August 30 an appeal was made to the Newspaper Society without avail; then the question was opened up with the county associations, only to meet with dilatory tactics; and on November 25 the Newspaper Society was asked to consider the former letter. " Our members resent the delay and it will be difficult for us to prevent the handing in of notices in some cases unless the matter is dealt with promptly . . . The matter has become one of extreme urgency."

On December 7 Mr. Bird replied for the Society that already in many offices the demand for increases had been met, and further "the matter is not one in which the Executive is prepared to interfere with the individual judgment of the members of the Newspaper Society, and in its opinion members of newspaper staffs should apply direct to their respective employers." Truly an exasperating position for a Union striving to obtain an act of admitted elementary justice. With dogged persistence we went to the Society again, and I have kept a copy of our reply, from which the following is extracted:

The concessions which have been made by many individual employers are altogether unsatisfactory, and a decision of a southern County Association to give a bonus of 20 per cent. on 1914 wages will mean hardly anything to many of our members. It also operates unfairly as between lower and higher paid men. Those who need most get least, and this is a serious matter, as the majority of weekly journalists in the south received under 45/- in 1914, and over a third received not more than 35/-. Many of them have received increases ranging round about 5/- since 1914, so that the 20 per cent. means a very small addition. Speaking generally, individual dealing with wages produces a crop of inequalities and anomalies which are unfair to good employers as well as to members of the staffs of proprietors who pay the lowest wages. The crying need for a great levelling up and uniform treatment is proved by a recent wages census which the Union has carried out. This shows that, while a few firms have given increases of 7/6d., 10/- and even up to 15/-, many others have not exceeded 5/-, and some have given no increases at all.

On the general question of collective bargaining my Committee draw your attention to the fact that in almost every newspaper in the country recently the Whitley Report has been eulogised. Why, then, are newspaper proprietors themselves opposed to the application of the principle to their journalistic staffs? Collective bargaining is fairer for everyone concerned than individual bargaining, and experience in connection with the Newspaper Federation area shows that it can be applied without any difficulty to journalistic staffs. My Committee earnestly appeal to your Society to reconsider its decision. The Union desires to maintain friendly relations with the federated proprietors, but each day brings many letters from all parts of the country expressing serious discontent and irritation. If the refusal to meet the Union is re-affirmed there can be no question that at its annual conference in three or four months time the Union will take a definite step to ally itself with other trade union forces in the newspaper industry, with the object of securing by other means the justice which is denied through friendly negotiation.

The last sentence of the above seemed to worry the President a little, for he wrote me: "If you approve of the last three or four lines I shall not suggest any revision, but I am not at all certain we should make the threat so positive, as it might put back negotiations with other federations still going on." Although I was not by any means yet convinced of the wisdom of affiliation to the printing unions I did not, as far as memory carries me, object to the veiled threat. Doubtless my indignation at proprietorial evasion led me to agree that a stronger line was necessary.

On January 14, 1918, Mr. Frank Bird (then the secretary of

George H. Lethem
Pioneer, three times President, and a
General Treasurer.



TOM FOSTER
General Treasurer for 21 years;
President, 1941.

both the Newspaper Society and the Federation) wrote that all the Society could do was to make recommendations to their members to consider carefully the question of salaries "with a view of putting their reporting and editorial staffs on such a basis as will enable them to maintain their social position." In that letter was used a phrase of which Union propagandists rightly made the most use—"the statements you make as to low rates of wages in some offices are to be deplored,"—though in strict grammar it was the statements and not the low wages which were deplored.

Scotland was always difficult ground to work and therefore special interest was aroused by the reception of a Union deputation by the Scottish Newspaper Proprietors' Association, whose membership comprised the owners of 70 or 80 weekly papers. One point made by the Union men was that pressmen in Scotland had been paid on a lower scale than the rates in England. After the shocking examples quoted in England one wondered what unplumbed depths our Scottish comrades were touching. As expected the linage bogey duly made its appearance. Such earnings, it was said, made some local reporters so comfortable that they had no wish to get on a daily staff. In one town, it was shown, all the linage centred in one office and the men in the other office had none. One proprietorial contention was that owing to linage the cream of the local news appeared in the daily papers "and they use our time, our paper, our pens and ink, our telephones and light." This plaintive protest received its adequate reply. A better tone supervened when Baillie Adams, who presided, said they admitted that they were well served by their men and recognised the difficulties working journalists were up against.

After my election as President at our fourth war A.D.M., held at Leicester at Easter, 1918, I was able to infuse the usual "message" in the *Journalist* with a spirit of optimism. Salaries must be placed on a sound and firm footing as the only real basis of progress, but the complexity of the question was enforced by the fact that the rates of pay within the range of Union membership touched the extremes of 25/- and £25 per week. Nevertheless the position was full of encouragement. The two main objects of the Union in that tragic and testing time were defined as (1) permanently to improve the status, conditions and rewards of journalism, so that Service members would find on their return a better environment in which to work; (2) to secure the best

possible provision for those who were "carrying-on" at home, to help them to meet the strain of harder work and the rising prices of the necessaries of life.

We had not long to wait for an important advance. The Newspaper Society, after a correspondence spread over seven months, at last consented to receive a deputation. It was like the fall of the walls of Jericho. We had a strong and urgent case to present when we met them on April 9. I was entrusted with the introductory statement and in it I reviewed the whole wages position. The increases conceded by the Newspaper Federation had been generally paid and a better feeling thereby created. One county federation had met the Union, and it was due to representations from the county associations that the Society agreed to meet the Union. It was pointed out that proprietors had taken radical measures to meet the increased cost of production. Sizes were reduced, advertisement rates and the prices of papers increased, and many were saving money by working with reduced staffs. Therefore it was only fair that the working journalist, whose brain and enterprise were essential to the production, should receive consideration:

During the war journalism has advanced to a more important place in the eyes of the governing classes than has ever been acknowledged before. The essential national services of the Press are recognised and the responsibility of the work is sufficiently marked by the provisions of D.O.R.A., which greatly exceed even the terrors of the old libel law, under which the journalist has constantly to protect the interests of his employer. Public work is becoming more manifold, more intricate, and the whole trend of it demands from the journalist greater knowledge, aptitude, education and efficiency. A larger expenditure on books is necessary, and yet many a journalist does not get enough money to maintain his home at the proper standard, and to keep up the appearance which his public work demands, without suffering privation in a greater or less degree. If journalism is to become more and more the honourable and dignified calling which its public position demands that it shall be, its monetary rewards must be greater than they have been in the past, and yet in actual fact at this moment there are journalists who get much less than artisans, less than the compositors who set the copy which their brain has produced, and even less than the scavengers employed by the local authorities of the districts in which they work. We cannot find a more suitable word to describe these conditions than that contained in a letter from your society and that word is "deplorable."

We were able to commend the example of many Northern firms who had acted generously in special cases which a percentage increase based on pre-war rates did not touch. Although the Newspaper Federation did not allot any specified increase to men receiving over 75/- a week, as a matter of fact the majority of the Federation had given increases to all members of their staffs except those with very high salaries. We hoped the News-

paper Society would do likewise. Our request was the adoption of what was then being spoken of all over the country as "the Union war bonus," just as nowadays many vacancy advertisements include the words "N.U.J. rates."

In exactly a week the Society sent us a circular which they forwarded to all their members recommending the payment of the Union bonus scales. It was revealed that the Society had also received a deputation from the Institute of Journalists, but rejected the "graded scale" suggested, taking in preference the Union's advances. It was recommended that employees receiving over 75/- a week should be dealt with at the discretion of the employer, and that "no qualified reporter shall receive less than 42/- per week." Exceptional cases were to be considered on their merits by the parties concerned, and, failing an amicable understanding, to be referred with the consent of both parties, to a joint committee of three members of the Society and three members of the organisation to which the employee belonged. The Southern Federation, as independent of the Newspaper Society, had to be approached separately. After the interview the Federation recommended that members accept the terms proposed by the Union, "effect to be given to this forthwith."

These recommendations by the Newspaper Federation, the Newspaper Society and the Southern Federation (including chiefly dailies and a few weeklies) were regarded as a gain of the war bonus for both daily and weekly papers throughout England and Wales, but it was subsequently discovered that the South Western Federation, embracing Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, was not represented at the N.S. conference, and though affiliated to the N.S., was not governed by its decision. Negotiations were opened, a Union deputation was received and the scales adopted by the other bodies were approved. The S.W. Federation was markedly friendly, that spirit being largely prompted by such proprietors as Sir James Owen (Exeter) and Mr. A. Browning Lyne (Bodmin). In a letter the former said: "I want my staff to live decently. I've been through the mill myself and know what it is to pinch to make both ends meet, and the process is not pleasant, especially for the wife. You may rely on me always to try to do the fair thing." The Union representatives were T. Jay and A. J. Rhodes (Executive), R. K. Murray (Plymouth), P. Barnes (Exeter), J. H. Cole (Barnstaple), and C. Gerry (Torquay). Rhodes made great play with the linage question. He said that where such income had dropped heavily

the employers had not said to the men "As your linage is part of your wages I must make up in wages what you have lost in linage." Employers could not have it both ways. Sir James Owen agreed with this and the report significantly adds that nothing further was said on the subject. A Bath proprietor asked why, if men were so badly paid, did they not go where they could get better wages? Rhodes retorted that the bad conditions existed all over the country and the "plums" were so few as to be unobtainable by the majority. Consequently the Union was engaged in a national effort to improve conditions.

The war bonus success of 1917-18 was at best only a palliative. It brought relief to hard-pressed men. A few only of the proprietors failed to pay the bonus and a number of the more enlightened paid more than the scale. But in reality the economic position of the journalist was far from satisfactory. The printers were getting more substantial rises, civil servants, teachers and all kinds of manual workers, left us far behind in the wages race. As the autumn of 1918 approached the stronger branches became restive. Mention is made elsewhere of how South Wales by a lone-hand fight got an instalment of justice: other branches were getting equally militant and the response of the Executive was to drop its opposition to a general wages demand, and start a new campaign. This time it was a real National Programme for a comprehensive and permanent uplift. In the October *Journalist* it was thus announced: "A new wages offensive was launched at dawn or thereabouts on September 21, when branch secretaries received through the post Executive instructions to go over the top—of the lino rate. On the whole the new movement has been taken up enthusiastically. One or two branches, however, have taken the Quixotic view that because members got a bonus a year ago or in April, they should not ask for anything more until—well apparently, until the proprietors have recovered from that shock. They need not be so considerate. Newspaper proprietors are growing accustomed to shell-out shock. The printers have hardened them." This bears the undoubted mark of the pen of H. M. Richardson, just installed in office as the General Secretary. The Executive proposal was to ask the proprietors for a minimum wage 25 per cent. above the standard of the linotype operators. This "super-lino" rate was suggested to the Newspaper Society in October and rejected. After that the Union presented a scale ranging from a minimum of £3 a week for the small weeklies to £5 5s. for the dailies in the large

provincial cities. Amendments and counter-proposals followed and the final interview took place in London on January 15, 1919. The Society was represented by Messrs. Allan Jeans, of Liverpool (The President), F. C. Barber (Bath), J. C. Coppock (Warrington), W. Palmer (Bedford), V. Knapp (Kingston-on-Thames), and F. Bird (Secretary). The Union deputation comprised F. J. Mansfield (President), J. E. Brown, T. Foster, J. Haslam and H. M. Richardson. As the result of two hours keen discussion we worked out an agreement, of which the chief points were as follows:

	£	s.	d.
Minimum for weeklies	3	0	0
Minimum in towns where a daily paper is published	3	5	0
Rates for daily papers—			
Towns under 100,000	3	13	6
Over 100,000 and under 250,000	3	18	6
250,000 and over	4	4	0

These rates for full members of the N.U.J., that is journalists who have been earning their living in journalism for three years, and have reached the age of 23. The wage or bonus, or both, whichever is the higher, to be advanced to a minimum of 25/- per week above the 1914 rates. The new settlement not a war bonus, but permanent wages. These rates not to prejudice higher existing rates. A standing joint committee of five from each organisation to be formed to discuss any question or difficulty arising out of the agreement, the procedure to be in accordance with the constitution advised for the Whitley Council by the Labour Ministry.

These terms were issued immediately to Union branches, special meetings were held and a general sanction received. The N.S. immediately informed its members and the new rates became payable as from the first pay day in January. The conclusion of this agreement was a great achievement, both for the extra money gained and two provisions which represented a valuable advance for the Union on the pathway of collective bargaining: (1) the benefits inherent in the joint committee scheme; (2) making Union membership the qualification for the minimum. The latter clause relieved us from the necessity of pointing out to non-union journalists that the minimum standards, which were nearly double the pre-war average, had been won by the Union alone. This was a valuable advertisement at a time when the rival body was not only failing to do any constructive economic work, but was actually on occasion "queering the pitch" of those who were succeeding in that task. In a review of the position in the *Newspaper World*, (January 25, 1919) I observed:

These new permanent scales of minima are an important stage in the realization of the policy of the National Union. The wages campaign of the Union has advanced by leaps and bounds under the compulsion of war adversities. It is pleasant to hear the congratulations of colleagues now returning from the Army and Navy on our progress while they have

been away. A good deal of spade work has been done; we only regret that the advance has not been greater. The first duty of the Union was to secure the restoration of salaries which were reduced under the first shock of war; then followed our successful claims to war bonuses to meet the rising cost of living; and that was succeeded by the more permanent task of establishing grades of pay designed to put journalism on a more stable economic foundation. The first minimum to be secured was in London, where the N.P.A. in December, 1917, adopted the main points of the Union's scheme. Following that, minimum schedules were obtained for the trade and technical Press, and then for the periodical and "class" papers and the great fiction houses.

All this is the development of definite plans laid by the Union for the permanent uplift of journalism. The concessions obtained to date (and we now have for the first time a comprehensive range of minima covering the whole Kingdom) may be fairly interpreted as a recognition of the fact that reforms for an admittedly underpaid profession were long overdue. Indeed, it is not giving away any secret to say that many proprietors felt morally bound, in view of the big advances secured by our fellow craftsmen, the printers and men of allied trades, to improve the pay of their editorial staffs. We have no criticism to make on the policy of the printers. We wish them good luck. We have to admit that they teach us much in organization and unity. There is no aid, human or divine, for those who refuse to help themselves. At last journalists are realizing that their fate is in their own hands; that in the strength of their own unity they can do much. For years we have been recording and assisting the economic betterment of practically every other class of labour in the country, and yet journalists are only now beginning to feel in their own pockets the benefits of the practice of those principles which they have enunciated and advocated for others. It is a piece of irony which must amaze the student of economic progress. Happily it may now be said that working journalists, through the instrumentality of the National Union, are getting alive to their own just claims, and to the value of combination among themselves for the purpose of negotiation with those who employ them.

How did the agreement work? The Joint Committee held its first meeting in March, and one practical outcome was the concession of a minimum of five guineas a week for the London representatives of provincial dailies. We had asked for the N.P.A. six-guinea minimum. But for a few black spots in the country the agreement was loyally observed, and it was good to have the proprietors urging the Union to leave no stone unturned to enforce obedience on defaulters. One famous paper, the *Scotsman*, responded to the appeal of the Newspaper Society by a prompt adjustment of salaries, and that was a good example to other Scottish proprietors. The determined spirit of the Union was was displayed by a strike at one office which failed to comply. The Executive sent the General Secretary to the town. He called the staff out and interviewed the manager. Result—within two hours the men were back on the promise that the agreement would be honoured as from January 1.

Some other incidents of a similar character were narrated at the A.D.M. in London at the following Easter, much to the relish and amusement of delegates. At A——— members downed tools

in the middle of the election and after a three-hour strike got a minimum established at £3 10s. a week. That strike, said Richardson, rapidly became known and he believed the editor was heartily cursed by the Society for giving way so easily, but what else could he do? (Laughter). In another case of default they struck the office on the eve of the Lincoln handicap. Richardson got on the telephone to the editor, who refused an interview, whereupon he said he had come specially from Manchester to call his men out. The editor exclaimed "What!" and nearly fused his line, but he gave way. At 7-30 they went round to see him and at 8-10 the men were all back at work. At another place an editor-reporter who was getting only £2 a week and was refused any advance, left the office at an inopportune moment and the Union threatened if the minimum was not paid by a certain time they would circularise the whole town, urging traders to boycott the paper. The proprietors paid up the next day. When in 1932 Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld stated in the *World's Press News* that the strike weapon had been tried by journalists and had failed, Richardson's retort was a direct contradiction. He wrote: "Effective negotiation is possible only when there is a possibility of negotiation being broken off and a more unpleasant alternative taking its place . . . Our wages agreements were won by the strike weapon, which was used in the North, the Midlands, on the South, the West and East Coasts, before we could get full recognition or agreements from the organised proprietors." The editor of the *Daily Express* was gently reproved for being "mistaken."

Reviews of the year's work, 1918-19, at the A.D.M. wore the general aspect of congratulation. In many respects, declared the President, it had been the most memorable, strenuous, and successful year in the history of the Union. It had been a year of victorious advance and their forces were now engaged in consolidating the ground gained. Military metaphors came readily to the tongue in those days. A striking fact noted was that 153 members of the Approved Society ceased to be insurable owing to exceeding the wage limit under the Act. The hope was that soon no journalist would come within the scope of the Act. The next task was to see that the new wage rates were not discounted by other factors, such as excessive hours and the overworking of depleted staffs. The programme indicated was the proper limitation of hours, the fair proportioning of staffs in defined grades, with rising scales of pay above the minima. The

Executive was instructed to press for a seven-hour day and a six-hour night, with a five and a half day week of 38½ and 33 hours respectively. Remarkable progress was reported from Scotland. Only two newspapers were not paying the minimum and over a hundred new members had been added to the Union. About that time a fine propaganda meeting held in Edinburgh was addressed by W. Veitch (general treasurer) who computed that as the result of the Union's efforts £160,000 extra a year was being received in salaries.

In May, 1919, a lacuna in the national minimum wage structure was discovered. We had thought the whole kingdom was covered, but learned that, as in the case of the war bonus, the Southern Federation did not recognise the decision of the Newspaper Society. These owners asked to be dealt with separately and the Union obliged them. We met them in London and they agreed to recommend their members to accept the N.S. national minimum agreement. Even so there was a local difficulty in South Wales, caused by the agreement secured earlier by the Union branch in that area. It was a question of the rescission of the area agreement and of payment dates. The branch and the proprietors came to an understanding and the national agreement came into force. The incident showed clearly how district movements could become an embarrassment when a national scheme was being evolved, and justified the cautious attitude of Union headquarters when the South Wales "revolt" occurred, though in this case local initiative proved on the whole an advantage.

There was no prolonged rest in the oasis of national minima, for the cost of living made further action imperative. So the Union host by the autumn of 1919 had struck its tents and was again on the march. What the line of action was and how it led to a novel development in policy must now be told in some detail. Already the Union in its brief history had created precedents: now it was the surprising introduction of arbitration into the procedure of our wages campaign. The proprietors refused our request for a higher scale of minima, so we agreed on an appeal to Caesar. Tuesday, January 20, 1920, was a notable day in the annals of journalism, for it was the day of arbitration between the Union and the organised newspaper proprietors of England and Wales, upon the claims of the Union for increases in the national scales of minimum salaries. The independent umpire was Sir Thomas Munro, the clerk of the Lanarkshire County

Council, and a man of great experience in handling big industrial questions. Scotland did not come within the scope of the hearing, so there was an element of fitness in his crossing the border to give judgment in an English dispute. The two arbitrators were: W. Meakin for the Union, and Mr. Meredith T. Whittaker for the proprietors. The hearing took place in London, and was completed in one long day's sittings, lasting from 10-30 a.m. to 8-40 p.m. Although twenty-three years have passed, the scene, with its atmosphere of novelty and drama, still lives in the memory. The case for the employers was conducted by Mr. Valentine Knapp, the President of the Newspaper Society, an editor of long experience, and a man of dignity and old fashioned courtesy, but a determined fighter for his side, and one capable of tart and testy retort. H. M. Richardson was "counsel" for the Union, and he presented the "case" with marked ability. Though statistics were never his strong point, he was, on this critical occasion, well furnished with fact and figure, readily forthcoming on demand. When he talked at large on the nature of journalism, and the lot of journalists, his wit and irony proved to be powerful weapons in the Union armoury. By timely comment and question Meakin, from "the bench," took care that vital Union points were not lost.

As this was probably the high spot in Meakin's Union career it will be appropriate here to glance at his record. Among the patient and persistent workers who devoted themselves wholeheartedly to Union work Walter Meakin enjoys an easy pre-eminence. No one, except Watts himself, put in such a long spell of arduous and responsible labour. In those first years when masses of fact were being assembled for coming wage movements his unremitting industry was most valuable, and I recall now the wonder and admiration with which I used to regard his self-sacrificing toil. Time after time, when the stage of action came, he was ready with his comprehensive report, supported by a multitude of statistics, and embellished by the best of arguments for the betterment of conditions. Emotion never led him astray from the path of reason and moderation, and a survey of the many documents that came from his pen gives the impression of statesmanship. His appearance was in harmony; looking at him in conference, speaking on difficult points of policy, he seemed, by a little stretch of the imagination, to be just like some wise owl. When he advocated any course we knew that there was a strong case. He did not start life as a journalist.

For nine years he was in the department of the General Manager of the Midland Railway at Derby; but he was writing for the papers and in 1904 took the plunge in a job at Leamington Spa, from which he went to the Leeds office of the *Yorkshire Observer* in that year. Two years later he was in charge of the office; in 1912 he joined the *Manchester Guardian;* in 1917 became the labour correspondent of the *Daily News;* and in 1931, on the death of Mr. S. G. Smeed, he was appointed secretary of the Newspaper Press Fund, which post he held until his death in 1940 at the age of 61. The wreath we sent bore the tribute: "A beloved colleague, wise in judgment, and untiring in service." I had the pleasure of meeting him, not long before he died, at Worthing (where I had gone to live on retirement from Fleet-Street, in 1936), when he was on his way to inquire into a Press Fund relief case at Goring-on-Sea. At lunch we revelled in reminiscences of our comradeship in Union work and battles. His interest in the Union had not bated a jot. He was still the cautious counseller, despite the nickname of "Comrade Walt," which was given him when as Labour expert he went to Soviet Russia.

Meakin was one of the original members of the West Riding Provisional Branch, attending the Leeds A.D.M. 1908 as a delegate; he was elected to the executive, representing that district. He was minute secretary of the first A.D.M., and reported many following A.D.M.'s (gratuitously) for the *Journal.* He remained on the N.E.C. until he left to join the Press Fund. When the Employment Bureau was created he was secretary, and that post he held until a whole time secretary of the Union was appointed in 1918. He was also secretary of the Wages Committee until that year. These two posts involved the hardest and most fundamental work of the organisation, outside the general secretaryship. They gave him the fullest knowledge of journalistic conditions all over the country, and to a man of his cast of mind that meant the practical touch. It was inevitable that when in 1919 the Union needed an arbitrator for the Munro inquiry, Meakin should be our unanimous choice. His knowledge and powers of quiet persuasion gained much for journalists, in opposition to the experienced representative of the Newspaper Society, Mr. Meredith Whittaker. When he was chosen vice-president of the Union in 1922 Richardson recalled that he and Meakin were the only two members of the Executive who were on the first fully-constituted N.E.C. appointed in 1908. The

long delay in placing him at the head was not the fault of the Union, for Meakin was ever shy of honours.

To come back to the arbitration, the terms of reference showed that decision had to be taken as to "what if any, increases shall be made in the rates of pay" fixed by the existing agreement between the Newspaper Society and the N.U.J., dated January 1, 1919; the award of the arbitrators to be subject to review, at the end of twelve months, upon one month's notice given by either side. It is not possible here to deal fully with the evidence and the arguments—the Union's opening case alone would fill a score of these pages—but the main points must be taken from the official report issued by agreement of both parties. Richardson said there was a great illusion, shared by many newspaper proprietors, that journalism was a sort of joy ride; on the contrary it was hard and strenuous work, of unduly long hours, and it called for considerably more than an average amount of intelligence, ability and training. That the Newspaper Society said a man was not qualified for the minimum until he was twenty-three, was an admission of the need of training, and the fact that of the service members one in every eight had gained a Commission and one in four N.C.O. rank, was proof of initiative, judgment and education. The existing minima ranging from £3 to £4 4s. per week were totally inadequate. The £3 was an increase of only 100 per cent. on the lowest pre-war wage, and not only had the cost of living increased by 130 per cent., but they claimed that pre-war wages were too low, and that increases should be given which would mean a real rise in the status of journalists. The Council for the asbestos trade had decided that before the war a man at eighteen should have had 9d. an hour. He suggested that journalists were worth at least another 1½d. an hour. That would give them 49/- for 56 hours in 1914, and the addition of 130 per cent for the cost of living gave the figure now suggested as the weekly paper minimum by the Union, £5 10s. Richardson here produced a new set of demands, and upon finding that these differed from those put forward in the preceding September, Mr. Knapp complained that he had based all his calculations on the September figures, and thus he was at a great disadvantage, but the chairman assured him: "I will see that you are not."

It is necessary to explain here that in September, 1919, the Union asked the Society to revise the agreement in force by the adoption of new minimum rates and improved conditions. The ranges of rates proposed were:

Local weeklies, £4 0s. 0d. to £5 10s. 0d.; bi- and tri-weeklies, £4 7s. 6d. to £6 0s. 0d.; National weeklies, £5 10s. 0d. to £6 6s. 0d.; trade and interest papers: Editors, £5 5s. 0d. to £8; Special papers: reporters and sub-editors, £4 0s. 0d. to £5 10 0s.; evening papers, £4 7s. 6d. to £6 10s. 0d. morning papers, £4 7s. 6d. to £7 10s. 0d.

Above rates to be paid to full members of the N.U.J. (including artists and photographers, irrespective of sex) who are 23 years of age and have had not less than three years' experience. Scales of pay were proposed for members aged from 19 to 23; for editors, editor-reporters, editor-managers and reporter-managers. Chief sub-editors, and chief reporters one third above minumum, and deputies 25 per cent. above. Whole time district representatives not less than head office rates. Commissions on advertisements, etc., not to count as part of wages, nor "any other activity." A second indentured apprentice or other learner under 23 years of age not to be employed until there are more than four seniors employed at not less than the minimum wage. Not less than three-fifths of any sub-editorial, or two-fifths of reportorial, staff (excluding chief sub-editors and chief-reporters) to be paid 20 per cent. above the minimum rates. A day and a half free each week and an annual holiday of three weeks, with full pay. A joint committee of proprietors and Union to deal with all difficulties arising out of the agreement.

The Newspaper Society discussed this carefully-drafted "charter" for two hours with the Union deputation, rejected the "conditions," and agreed to let the question of wages go to arbitration. Union leaders keenly debated the right course to take on the minimum schedule and it was decided, as the proprietors had refused to base the arbitration on the September proposals, to frame a new and higher schedule. It was this revised demand which gave the proprietors a flutter when it was produced at the arbitration. The new rates submitted were as follows:

WEEKLY PAPERS.	£	s.	d.
In towns with no daily papers	5	10	6
Or if no special rate for bi-and-tri weeklies	5	15	0
Bi-and-tri weeklies	5	15	0
In towns with dailies:—			
Population under 100,000	5	17	6
Population over 100,000	6	0	0
Population over 250,000	6	10	0
Sunday or national weeklies	7	10	0

DAILY PAPERS.	Evening. £	s.	d.	Morning. £	s.	d.
Towns under 100,000	6	12	6	7	0	0
Over 100,000 and under 250,000	7	2	6	7	10	0
Over 250,000	7	10	0	8	0	0

Continuing his opening speech Richardson compared journalists' wages with those of teachers, with whom, he said, journalists ranked as public educators, but teachers had security of tenure, and pensions on retiring. There was no such valuable consideration for journalists, who were public servants in private employment. A member living on the minimum wrote: "Life is a nightmare, not worth living." In some offices, whatever the minimum, it would be the maximum, and responsible men would

not get more. He quoted the new agreement made by the London proprietors giving an eight-guinea minimum, and also the Australian arbitration award, in which Mr. Justice Isaacs declared that no remuneration was adequate which did not allow provision to be made for future eventualities. Some passages of the Union's case are of such striking value as expositions of the philosophy of journalism, that they call for quotation. Here are extracts:

We do not think it will be denied on the part of the Newspaper Society that when the Union started in 1907 journalistic salaries were generally low, and in many cases so bad as to constitute a public scandal; nor that there would have been a public scandal had it not been for the fact that the machinery for exposing the scandal was under the control of the people who were mainly responsible for the scandalous conditions. Prominent members of the Newspaper Society have, in conference with us, admitted that the wages in many offices before the war were deplorable. I say the owners mainly, and not solely, were responsible, because unquestionably the journalists were guilty of contributory negligence in not having effectively organised. Journalism is a profession or occupation which attracts to itself young men, who, generally speaking, are individualistic, ambitious, and Bohemian—and individualism, ambition, and Bohemianism are all attributes which tend to prevent that spirit of co-operation and of mutual reliance which are the essence of trade unionism. Trade unionism in journalism is an exotic growth. Journalism is a temperamental occupation. Journalists are born, not made; and a journalist who finds that he is being badly treated has not sense enough to get born again and born different. He goes on striving to do his best in the hope that some day some less miserly proprietor will offer him a better job. Trade unionism was anti-pathetic to the average journalist's nature. Generations of trade unions went by before the journalists began to organise on a trade union basis. Then, when they began, it was not out of any doctrinaire belief in brotherhood of man, or democracy. The Union sprang from sheer economic necessity. There were some married men—men with four children—getting no more than 28s. a week. The Union was founded to remove that scandal, and by the spring of 1914 it felt strong enough to make preparations for launching a national campaign for improving the lot of the lowest-paid men. The founders of the Union were without exception men who had had the ability or the luck to rise to positions of comparative comfort. The formation of the Union was a gesture of passionate resentment that others should be forced to go through the ill-paid drudgery from which they had emerged.

We had to take into account certain facts which we submit should be taken into account now. The first is that a pressman, whether he be an editor or leader writer, a sub-editor, a sporting editor, a reporter, an artist, or a photographer, has to be what is called gentlemanly. *He* must be decently dressed, even though his children and his wife wear the veriest shoddy, as many of them do. The pressman must be a man of parts, of something more than elementary education. The second fact is that he must be tactful, mentally and physically alert; he must possess quite unusual mental stamina and powers of concentration, for he must be able to follow the points of anything—debate, legal case, and so on—and present the salient facts to the public almost on the spur of the moment. The third fact was, and is, that the journalists' life is in many offices very irregular, very exhausting; and that the hours worked, viewed in the light of to-day, are atrociously long. The fourth fact was, and is, that the journalist is the life and soul of the paper he serves. He is the paper. You might have a very dull proprietor, or a very dull composing

staff, or a very dull clerical and advertising staff, or a very dull publishing staff—but you can have all this dullness; and if you have a bright and fertile sub-editing, leader writing, and reporting staff you will have a bright paper. The success of a paper depends upon the day-to-day initiative and energy and devotion of the editorial staff—the pressmen who produce it.

We knew in 1914 that the enthusiasm of pressmen was most shamelessly exploited in many offices. Press life had a glamour, it promised prizes. There is the literary instinct craving for a means of expression. Journalism was an opening for the ambitious. Besides, people believed that even the lowest rung in the journalist ladder was several feet above the level of the manual worker, and only a little lower than the silk-hatted professional man. Young men went into journalism at seventeen or eighteen, direct from school, for next to nothing. In some cases their misguided parents paid premiums to have them trained. How did they know that, unless they were exceptionally gifted and pretty lucky, they would never get more than £3 or £4 for a week of anything from fifty to sixty hours? The newspaper proprietors did not publish sensational disclosures about the folly of entering journalism. That never became a stunt. On the contrary, many of them took in bright youths and sweated them, paying them from 5s. to 15s. a week until they were twenty, and then—I am speaking now of weekly papers—from 25s. to 30s. a week, and telling them that they were gaining valuable experience. It is true to say that in many of the worst offices half the staff lived on experience, and the other half on regrets—that they had not gained enough experience of journalism to get out of it when they were young enough to learn some other craft. The pressman never is, but always to be, blessed. There were other offices of a much better type.

In those days journalists were secretive about their salaries. Probably they realised that publicity would be rather too much of a shock for the public men with whom they had to come in contact. Anyhow, it would have destroyed public confidence in their integrity had it been known that they were getting 35s. a week instead of the £4 which—you judged from their speech, their dress, their gentlemanly ways—they were assumed to get. Many a poor reporter has loftily waved away a ten shilling tip to keep a case out of the papers, when that ten shillings would have meant more than two days' salary. That the British press was, and is, in this sense incorruptible, is a tribute to an heroic self-denial on the part of men who do look upon themselves as professional men and servants of the public, and try to act as such.

The life of an evening paper sub-editor, reporter, sports editor, leader-writer (where such are distinctively employed) is a life of constant rush, of big and little problems, of almost interminable endeavour. Especially is this so in towns where two or more papers are produced in competition one with another, for then there is the edition by edition comparison as to events missed. The test is necessary in the interests of efficiency, and often it goes hard with the reporter or sub-editor who from any cause can be held responsible for allowing his paper to be beaten on a single point. Many of these evening papers are making very handsome profits. We believe that all can afford to pay the rates we ask. We ask in a city such as Manchester a minimum for evening paper men of £7 10s. equal in the purchasing power of necessities to about £3 before the war. We ask the Court to compare that figure, £7 10s., with the earnings of a class of men whose work approximates in one sense to that of reporters on an evening paper—the buyers in the cotton trade. These buyers are men trained to know a good yarn by sight or touch, just as the reporter or sub-editor is trained to know a good story. The buyers have to be fairly good judges of men and material. The reporter must have like attributes. He must be able to draw men out, to induce confidences, be likeable, smart in address and attire, be able to talk to mayors, aldermen, and other important people. He must be a resilient mass of receptivity, capable of taking an impression and bounding off with it to the nearest telephone to get it in the stop press. In many towns he is the guide,

philosopher, and friend of the city fathers. He gets, according to our present rate, £4 4s. a week in the big towns, equal to about 35s. before the war, whereas before the war the average was about £3 10s.; while the average buyer with a cotton firm now gets from £300 to £400 in salary, and as much again in commission. Wherever possible journalists put their sons in cotton mills instead of to the newspaper trade.

The highest rate we ask is naturally for the morning paper men, who, while the world sleeps, record its doings. It is the ambition of most budding weekly paper men to get on a morning paper. . .The mental strain of sub-editing on a modern morning paper is tremendous. A sub-editor must have the ability to make bricks without straw, and to reduce redundance to essentials. He must have a mind that is both synthetic and analytic. He must be able to take hold of three or four different accounts of an event and weld them into one coherent whole, not at his leisure, but with one eye on the clock, for time is the very essence of catching editions. The average morning sub-editor finishes his night's work—generally a spell of seven hours to eight hours, without a break for a meal—fagged out in mind and body, his hands blue with sharpening his blue lead, his face blue with the action of rubbing his face in amazement that so many things can be wrong with the world, or at least with the copy which the world produces. And after he has done his work he has to set off in the small hours to walk from one-and-a-half to four miles home and bed. The proprietor of the paper, the shareholders, and the manager by then—if they are of average virtue—have been in bed five or six hours. The morning papers are made by our members.

Replying for the employers Mr. Knapp said he had no doubt there were cases of hardship. There were black sheep in every flock and he dared say there were bad employers in the profession. He was not there to defend them. They were dealing with a profession which, on the one side, was very poor; some of the employers were not better off than some of the journalists. His case was that what was not in the till could not be paid out, and he would be able to prove that a great many employers would not be able to pay even the rates suggested in September, without curtailing staffs, and some would have to shut up. How much less would they be in a position to pay the rates suggested that day? The average minimum salary before the war for weeklies was about 30/-; in his own experience it ranged from 28/- to 32/-. On dailies the average minimum was 42/-. Now on weeklies it was £3, and on dailies £4 4s. A questionnaire sent out by the Society last October revealed that 72 per cent. of the staffs were paid above the existing minimum. Asked if they could retain existing staffs if the new demands were conceded, 23 out of 29 morning papers gave an emphatic "No," and 14 out of 28 evening papers gave the same reply. Of 282 weeklies 92 said they could not pay the rates.

Richardson asked for the titles of the papers, but Mr. Knapp simply handed copies of a number to the chairman, the appearance of which, he suggested, showed their small resources. Richardson countered with the statement that he knew all about

one of them. During part of the war it was edited by a Union member, who found it losing money, but by enterprise made it pay to the extent of eight guineas a week. If that man had been raised from the minimum of £3 to £5 10s. 6d. a week there would still have been left to the proprietors, who did not work, at least as much as the man was getting. True the man, who could not live on his wage, got £45 a year as food controller or pensions officer, but he did that in his spare time. Mr. Knapp was grateful for that fact, he said, because it showed that the industry was so poor that the men employed in it were not able to get a living wage merely as journalists, but were frequently employed on many other things. Richardson retorted that only eighteen members of the Union were in that position.

Mr. Knapp proceeded to argue that although the wages of juniors were low, journalism offered big earnings to men of ability. It was not fair to compare pressmens' salaries, with compositors' wages. Journalists were paid during sickness and holidays. Though they did not get paid overtime, they had many means of income outside their wages. Linage was a very important consideration. One of the members of the Newspaper Society used to make £300 a year in linage and special reporting. Linage was done very largely in the employers' time and on his stationery and the employers did not complain. The incidence of linage was extremely unequal, and the only fair arrangement would be pooling in every office. On this Richardson's comment was that the linage total would work out at 1/4½d. per week per head. Beyond linage, said Mr. Knapp, a very large proportion of the income of some journalists was commission on advertisements. He contended that only 28 per cent. of journalists were being dealt with, as 72 per cent. were paid above the minimum, and the 28 per cent. were mainly young men. It would be absurd if rates such as those suggested in September were paid to such men. They would not be worth it and papers could not pay it. They had come to the limit.

The case for the morning newspaper proprietors was presented by Mr. G. E. Stembridge, manager of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*. He argued that there was no profession where a man's value was more promptly recognised than journalism; as soon as a man qualified for the higher rate of pay he was almost bound to get it. But if the minimum were unduly increased it would mean de-classifying the men at present much above the minimum, and they would regard themselves as being under



C. J. Bundock
First National Organiser,
General Secretary since 1937.
(He is addressing a conference of the I.E.J. in London
October 31, 1942).



WALTER MEAKIN

President, 1923; a West Riding pioneer; leader in early wages campaigns; Union's arbitrator, 1920.

a grievance. Some papers could afford to pay, others could not, and the present advertising boom was transitory. His contention was that journalists' linage earnings should be taken into account. For the evening papers Mr. A. Sprigg, of the *Leicester Mail*, stated that of 316 men on the staffs of papers in the Newspaper Society only 129 were on the minimum, 60 per cent. being above. Of 80 papers supplying information, 30 said they would have to cut down staffs if the September claim were granted, 12 said their men earned money by linage and special articles, one manager stating that the average linage was 6/9d. a week.

Richardson said the proprietors recognised their ability, and the necessity, to meet the extra costs of raw materials, but were not prepared to meet the extra cost of labour, which was quite as essential. The Chairman: They say that you and they are in the same boat.—Richardson: We are quite prepared to pay our members who are thrown out in consequence of this. We should not at the same time contemplate with equanimity the idea of retaining in our books men who have been thrown out of work if it meant adding work to men who were already working 50 to 60 hours a week.—The Chairman: Supposing wages were increased and the result was unemployment, what would the Union do ?—Richardson: We suggest that there should be a joint committee. If any member of the Society said "I cannot pay these wages; I am prepared to submit my books to the joint committee and to an independent auditor," we would go into it and if it were true that he could not pay and still have a reasonable return on his capital, we might agree to the payment of something less.—The Chairman suggested that the Union was on dangerous ground from the ordinary trade union point of view, in admitting that some should be paid less than the rates.—Richardson replied that the circumstances were different. In most industries if a firm closed down it meant that the article it had made would be made by some other firm. If a newspaper closed down other papers in that same district would increase their circulation, but that would not necessarily mean more work for journalists.—Mr. Knapp asked what body of employers would submit their accounts to a trade union ?

Evidence was then called for the Union. When the Chairman said the Union need not prove that no one could live comfortably on less than £3 a week, Richardson replied that they would prove that journalists could not live on less than £5 10s. 0d. The Chairman said evidence would certainly be desirable if the Union

wished for an award which would not merely make up for the increased cost of living but would also mean raising the pre-war status. J. B. Hobman, vice-president of the Union, editor of the *Birmingham Gazette*, said that reporters in that office worked seven-hour shifts, or 38 hours a week, and were paid for overtime (a very unusual thing in journalism). The papers in Birmingham had greatly improved, owing to managerial enterprise, and the work of good staffs, paid as well as possible. All the men were above the minimum. Asked by Mr. Knapp if he thought it reasonable that proprietors should submit their books to the Union, he said he did and looked for the day when possibly all balance sheets would have to be presented to the work people. He disclaimed the suggestion that he was a Guild Socialist and said he did not think it necessary to be such to approve the idea that profits might have to be limited and that before then they might have to know what they were. There was nothing revolutionary in that.—Meakin asked if the proprietors had not always alleged inability to pay?—Hobman: Yes, it is a mechanical cry. The increase given during the last two years has led to reforms in management.

The Chairman: Can you suggest any other reason why the proprietors should resist this application except the one that they cannot pay? I mean a reason which they would care to bring before an independent arbitration. I think it is admitted by the proprietors that the men are worth the money.—Hobman: I think the inability to pay is following the line of least resistance, that they are not anxious to pay and there is no force to make make them. They have not a proper conception of what is due journalists and the value of journalists.—Mr. Knapp: Is the witness aware that a great many of the proprietors sitting here are themselves working journalists?—Hobman: But of course there is a difference of interest.

After this little duel another point was brought out by F. J. Davies, of Worcester, who said he did not think the pre-war rates were sufficient. The present minimum for evening papers was £3 13s. 6d., but he had to spend £3 18s. 3d. and that did not include clothing. He produced his family budget, which the chairman described as very interesting. Sir George Toulmin elicited from the witness that he earned about 15/- a week by linage. T. A. Davies, Union leader in South Wales, said, on the question of raising the pre-war status, that if they had thought the court would not take that into consideration, they would have

urged the Executive not to listen to arbitration. He read a reasoned statement by his branch in defence of the retention of linage by reporters. Linage existed because it was necessary to the employers and to newspaper management. It was the employers who ordered linage and accepted it J. E. Brown, Surrey, brought out the point that linage was not confined to staff men, but much was done by free lance men. He urged that if proprietors put more energy into pushing their papers they would get larger sales and therefore higher advertisement rates.

Further evidence for the proprietors was given by Mr. A. Browning-Lyne, of the *Cornish Guardian*, Bodmin, who spoke for the South Western Federation of Newspaper Owners. He said that whether they could or could not pay the rates asked they ought not to be called on to do so. His wages and paper costs alone were £1,300 a year more than before the war, and that on total gross receipts of under £5,000. He allowed his staff to do other work. One was secretary of a company and another a rate collector. In one case an employee got over £6 a week and another over £4.—Richardson agreed that the witness was an exceptionally good employer, who allowed his men latitude to earn extra money, but there were only eighteen members of the Union in the whole country who held non-journalistic posts. The witness insisted that he would not pay £5 10s. 0d. to the men in his employ and said the fact was that their incomes were more than doubled.—Richardson: You talk like many proprietors and say that journalists have no time of their own and therefore extra work is done in their employer's time.—The witness: Journalists have time of their own. If the Union is going to be a rigid one of rules and regulations, in pleasant families in the little offices, the Union will cause trouble.—The Chairman was shocked when it was suggested that papers did not always get the full rates they announced for advertisements. "That is a horrible reflection on the honesty of the press," he protested.—The witness said he was a working journalist himself and that was why his own paper was so successful. He admitted that when he worked on a suburban paper at 25/- a week he was worth more, but he made considerable additions by linage. Mr. J. E. Bassett, owner of a Sidcup paper, told of six papers going out of existence during the preceding year owing to increased costs, and said that if the increases now asked were given it would mean the closing down of smaller papers. Mr. Arthur Beckett, of the Sussex News-

paper Owners' Association, said they viewed the proposed advance with alarm. Staffs would have to be cut down. Journalists had great chances of advancement, if they had ability; a minimum should be fixed on the basis of what a poor or indifferent worker ought to receive. Mr. H. Infield, a director of the Southern Publishing Company, Ltd., Brighton, said they employed 24 journalists and the increases now asked for would mean over £4,000 a year to his firm. Except for that year the paper could not meet it.

The award, which was anxiously awaited by both sides, was issued about a month later by Sir Thomas Munro. After clauses 1 to 3, referring to the agreement of January 1, 1919, and the failure of negotiations in the following autumn, it was pointed out (clause 4) that matters raised outside that agreement must be precluded. The award then proceeded:

(5). The Arbitrators were not agreed as to the position under the reference of the claim in respect of the London staffs of provincial newspapers. It was on the one hand contended that as the agreement of January 1, 1919, was silent on the point, this matter was excluded from the reference. On the other hand it was contended that an arrangement affecting such staffs subsequently arrived at between the Parties must be read into the agreement. I reserve my final determination on this point, but I recommend parties to endeavour to arrange the matter having regard to the whole circumstances of the case and to the general findings of this award. Failing an agreement being arrived at I reserve to myself the power to issue a supplementary award on this aspect of the claim.

(6). As the case was presented it falls to me to determine what, if any, increases should be made on the minimum rates of remuneration for the members of the Union fixed by the agreement of January 1, 1919. In arriving at my decision I am asked by the Union to have regard to the considerations, viz.: (*a*) the status of the members of the Union in respect of alleged pre-war and present under-remuneration, and (*b*) increased cost of living. On the other hand the Newspaper Society controvert the statement as to under-remuneration from the point of view of the status of the Journalistic profession, and as regards the other contention they submit that the agreement of January 1, 1919, adequately met the claim on account of increased cost of living, which has not, they allege, increased between that date and now to any such appreciable extent as to justify any substantial advance on the terms then conceded. They further contend that in present circumstances any substantial increase in rates of pay would result in many at least of the proprietors of the newspapers they represent being either unable to continue the issue of their newspapers, or being compelled to reduce their staffs. It was pointed out, and the representatives of the Union indicated that they realised, that any increase in rates of remuneration might, in the case of certain newspapers, result in it being financially difficult for the proprietors to retain the services of trained journalists in the future.

(7). Evidence was led by both parties in support of their respective contentions and I have carefully weighed it. I have on a full consideration of all the circumstances arrived at the conclusion that, while on the mere consideration of established figures as to the present scales of cost of living as compared with those prevailing at the date of the agreement of January 1, 1919, no very substantial claim could be established in justification of a material increase in the rates then agreed to, yet having regard to standard rates of pay recently established in occupations that may be held to

approximate to the status of the journalistic profession, some allowance beyond what might be granted were the sole consideration difference in cost of living between the dates referred to should be made. In arriving at my decision I have had regard to the fact that parties will have an opportunity of reconsidering the whole position at the end of twelve months, by which date conditions as they affect both the proprietors and the Union may, it is hoped, be more stabilised than they are at present.

(8). I therefore modify the agreement of January 1, 1919, to the following extent:—

Minimum for weeklies	£4 per week.
In towns where a daily paper is published	£4 5 0 per week.
Minimum for Daily Papers:—	
In towns where the population is under 100,000	£4 13 6 per week.
In towns of over 100,000 and under 250,000	£4 18 6 per week.
In towns of over 250,000	£5 4 0 per week.

(9). These rates are to be considered as minimum inclusive rates, the payment of which, except where special arrangements exist, or may be entered into between the employer and members of the Union, implies an obligation of whole time service on the part of the members of the Union.

(10). These rates shall be paid retrospectively from the first pay in January, 1920.

(11). The other conditions of the agreement of January 1, 1919, shall continue operative.

(12). Should any question arise as to the interpretation or application of this award I will determine it on the application of either Party.

At the request of both parties Sir Thomas Munro gave the following interpretation and ruling on clause 9 of the Award:

The Newspaper Society on the one hand ask whether, if there is a sufficient reason, employers may take the linage or outside appointments into consideration and that in these cases the minimum wages fixed by the Award would not automatically apply. The National Union of Journalists on their part enquire whether their members are debarred by the Award from attempting to limit hours and whether they are to be debarred from doing linage.

As regards the point raised by the Newspaper Society the interpretation I place upon my finding is that in all cases where the Employers utilise the whole time service of a member of the Union, they must pay the minimum wage irrespective of any emoluments which the employee may receive from other appointments or from linage, which do not interfere with his whole time service to the employer. If such emoluments are earned in the employers' time, the matter is one for adjustment having regard to the fact that the employer, if he sees fit, can call for undivided service during the ordinary working hours of the profession. The only circumstances in which the minimum wage need not be paid is where a special arrangement may exist between the employer and the member of the Union for part time service.

As regards the points raised by the Union (1) I have to draw the attention of parties to the fact that the Award does not deal with the question of hours of service, and (2) The further query as to linage appears to me to be covered by the ruling which I have given in response to the employers' question.

Acting in the spirit of clause 5 of the arbitration award the Society and the Union agreed on March 25, 1920, that the minimum for the London Offices of provincial newspapers and for their Parliamentary staffs should be the London rate of eight guineas after two years London experience. The main result of

the arbitration was felt by the Union as a whole to be disappointing. In some areas unfavourably affected by the operation of the grading by population there was a wave of indignation. Central London regarded the award as a very serious set-back to the whole wages movement. Bradford viewed it with "unqualified disgust," Exeter expressed "profound dissatisfaction" and called for a new demand at the end of the year. At Nottingham J. B. Hobman explained the reasons for the deficiencies of the award. A man of outstanding ability he himself held his ground well at the hearing. It was a serious deprivation to the Union when Hobman's health broke down and he could not step up to the presidency when the time came. He had it in him to render us brilliant service. He pictured how at the Arbitration the utmost the poverty-pleading proprietors, who refused an examination of their books, were prepared to concede was 5/- a week extra for the weekly men at 23 and a further 5/- at 28; how the umpire commented that chocolate trade clerks had just been awarded £4 a week; and how one proprietor was heard to say that "they never dreamt of increasing salaries till the Union came on the scene." South Wales accepted the award under protest. West London was "bitterly disappointed," and indeed there was wide recognition of the hardship to suburban journalists. Richardson's first reaction was not favourable, but in after years he revised his opinion. Writing a tribute to Meakin in 1931 he said: "Meakin was the Union's assessor on the Munro arbitration in 1920, and did much to persuade Sir Thomas to give an award which, as things turned out, was very good." Haslam the President, spoke of the "staggering fact" that by the new minimum of £4 our men of 23 and over were classed with some of the lowest forms of British labour. But still to have raised the lowest provincial rate of 30/- and less to 80/- as a minimum was something gained and would have been impossible without the Union. When at the Cardiff A.D.M., in the following April, Haslam gave his presidential review, he put the Union story into an expressive, if rough and ready, paragraph:

I never have been a great believer in arbitration in industrial disputes. I never thought we should get from it anything like the amount we were demanding. Despite that, there is this to be said for arbitration—it marks another stage in our progress as a trade union. Throughout our existence we have been fighting, at times when it seemed hopeless, for the construction and application of machinery by which we could have our conditions considered on a large organised scale. Without any organisation, without any combined purpose, without any common understanding, we tried to rise out of a most damaging state of chaos, throat-cutting rivalry and deplorable secrecy which prevailed among ourselves

a few years ago. With the employers, however, we first tried pacifist arguments. Then we ran a kind of guerrilla warfare. Afterwards we experimented with spasmodic threats to strike here and there on a small scale. We went from place to place like wandering agitators without any assured backing from working journalists, doing what we could to raise wages. Eventually we approached a national basis for a wages movement, got it, secured recognition, and now we are suffering from arbitration.

One unpleasant sequel to arbitration was the complaint of victimisation following the award. Foster declared that several delegates at the A.D.M. of 1920 were under threat of dismissal or were endangering their positions by attending. The dismissal of James Gibson, a member of the Executive, was one of the blackest things in the history of the Union. Judd (Southampton) said that of the first nine or ten members dismissed as the result of the award, four were branch secretaries. Richardson, who I always found by personal experience to be strangely sceptical on this particular matter of victimisation, said the actual position was that only one branch official had been dismissed, and three others had received a warning of one sort or another. C. P. Robertson expressed surprise at the secretary's attitude, but Richardson strengthened his statement by adding that in the case of the one branch official dismissed the branch would not suggest that he had been victimised. They were asking that no one should be dismissed without prior consideration by the joint Committee.

Mention was made during the arbitration proceedings of the encouraging precedent of Australia. Let us take a brief glance at it. Before 1910 Australian journalists had no organisation beyond a series of Press Clubs. When an attempt was made by the Writers' and Artists' Union to get itself registered the journalists, realising that that body did not properly represent them, formed the Australian Journalists' Association and obtained registration. This body, known as the A.J.A., promptly got to work, and on January 1, 1912, obtained an agreement which revolutionised the conditions of daily newspaper staffs. Till then the best salaries were about £6 a week (in Sydney for example); more received £5 and £5 10s,; but the great majority ranged from £2 10s. to £4. The new agreement doubled some salaries, and greatly increased those of 60 to 70 per cent. of all daily paper men. The concessions cost four daily papers £30,000 a year, but did not destroy their dividend-earning capacity. The men also obtained a six-day week of 48 hours. This gave a little extra trouble to the keepers of the diaries, but no need arose to increase personnel, though previously some of the men had worked eighteen or nineteen hours at a stretch.

Most of the employers observed the terms of the agreement, but an aggressive minority ignored it. The A.J.A. made formal application for a compulsory conference under the presidency of a federal judge. Under the advanced industrial laws of the Dominion this had to be immediately granted. The parties met at Melbourne, and the journalists secured the ratification of their charter; in fact, the agreement was actually tightened up. It was reported to the Federal Court, certified by the judge and became the law of the land. Writing in 1930 Sydney Pratt, General Secretary of the A.J.A., stated that the Association had over 1,800 members, being about 90 per cent. of those eligible to join. The salaries then paid were double what they were before the A.J.A. was formed, and the working conditions, he claimed, were the best in the world. Every salaried member of the staffs of metropolitan daily newspapers, of which there were 19 in the Dominion, must become a member of the A.J.A., unless he made a statutory declaration of conscientious objection. Grading, which the London proprietors rejected, was a fine art in Australia. Staffs were classified in four grades: 15 per cent. in A, 50 per cent. in B, and 35 per cent. in C and D. In Sydney and Melbourne the minimum weekly salaries were £14 in A; £11 10s., B; £9 12s. 6d., C; £6 12s. 6d., D. Provincial papers were graded by towns, the lowest minima being £6 14s. 6d. for an editor and £4 10s. 6d. for a junior. These rates were considerably higher than those in Great Britain, although the cost of living was lower in Australia. The A.J.A. was formed in 1911, so these striking results were achieved in less than 20 years.

In this chapter I have attempted the somewhat difficult task of telling within restricted space limits the story of Union achievements in the vital period 1917-1920, when the foundations of a structure of national wage settlement were laid. The process of enlarging and improving the plans and the work of construction has been going on ever since, and in a world where perfection is rarely attained, is likely to continue as long as journalism exists, but we can glance only briefly at the events after 1920 which led up to the agreements which are now in force. The agreement with the Newspaper Society, dated March 22, 1921, raised the scale of minima, the new rates ranging from £4 7s. 6d. for the weeklies to £5 15s. for the dailies in towns of over 250,000 population. The Scottish Daily Newspaper Society also signed this agreement. The first junior scale was conceded in a supplementary agreement of May 26, 1924, and filled an important gap in the

wage system. It began to operate at age 20, and the task of getting a scale for those under that age was left for future handling. A long process of negotiation proved to be necessary before the Newspaper Society would consent to the limitation of the numbers of juniors, but with the moral support of the Joint Industrial Council and the argumentative help of the P. & K.T.F., a definite conclusion was reached in March, 1929. The agreement covered training and apprenticeship. It was the first and only agreement that did so. An interesting provision was that every learner entering an office should serve a probationary period of six months before becoming an indentured apprentice. Proportions of juniors to seniors on staffs were duly defined.

New ground was again broken in 1934, when press photographers were formally recognised as journalists for the purposes of wages and conditions nationally agreed. The A.D.M., 1930, debated very seriously the failure to secure the three weeks' holiday and the five-and-a-half day working week. Leeds moved that an endeavour be made to get this established by Act of Parliament, but the feeling was that affiliation to the Professional Workers' Federation, who were seeking the reduction of working hours, would be more productive. In view of the failure of repeated efforts to bring the Newspaper Society to the point of agreement on holidays and hours the A.D.M. pledged full support to the N.E.C. if " action in bad offices " were conceived to be necessary. In secret session there was frank talk of the advisability of strikes. In June following, the Newspaper Society, evidently impressed by the determination of the Union, made a halting concession in the form of a memorandum declaring " as a principle " the right to one-and-a-half days a week or three days a fortnight free from duty, the application of it to be " subject to local accommodation." Also the Society confirmed " the principle that every journalist is entitled to an annual holiday with pay," no period stated. After some hard bargaining by Manchester men the Union obtained an agreement with the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Ltd., fixing minimum rates for the journalists and photographers employed on their many publications.

A reversal of the position came at the end of 1932, when the Newspaper Society asked for a reduction of wages by 15 per cent. It was the critical period of the " economic blitz," when the papers suffered a big reduction of advertising. The Union had a membership of 5,600 and faced serious unemployment as the result of newspaper amalgamations and economies. We paid out in 1931

in unemployment benefit £6,500, over £800 in benevolent grants and over £400 in victimisation pay. At a conference between the Society and the Union Mr. Harrison, President of the former, said that since 1923 the number of newspapers in England and Wales had decreased by 145, and the adverse conditions and growing competitive methods made a reduction of costs imperative. So the employers asked "their partners, the workers," to consider what could be done. In their reply the Union pointed out that in the early days of the War they had to subsidise low wages to enable men to live, and many members accepted reductions of 10 to 30 per cent. on very low wages. The Union did not think the industry was unable to continue paying the minimum rates; but if it was, the right and just remedy was not a reduction in wages. They suggested that a fairer remedy would be to increase the prices of papers to the public. Admitting the fall in advertising the Union thought papers would be all the better if they were more independent of the advertisers' subsidy. In other trades the Government favoured the raising of prices in the interests of primary producers, and that policy could be applied to newspapers. As to the diminution in the number of papers it was argued that surviving papers benefited by the lesser competition, and it was stated that about 60 new papers had been started in the period 1923-32.

The Union executive later decided not to agree to wage reduction, but that a temporary concession might be made where it could be proved that a paper was unable to carry on. The main contention was that the industry as a whole could afford the existing rates of pay. It was also urged that the proprietors, unchallenged by foreign competition, had all the advantages that could accrue from protection. The Newspaper Society politely scorned these arguments and regretted that the issue had not been presented to the Union's members. They also contested the conclusion drawn by the Union from an examination of the affairs of 150 provincial firms, that while a few papers were in a serious position, the great majority were doing well, even at that time, and had reserves to tide over a lean time not too prolonged.

The Union submitted that the information collected at Somerset House as to the state of 150 newspaper firms, chosen as representative of all categories, was more indicative of the state of the industry than the Society's own limited inquiry. They concluded: "If the members of your council who have shown losses during the last few years will confide in us, we shall be glad to discuss

the making of immediate concessions to them without any reference to an alteration of the national agreement." Throughout the negotiations the Union acted in close consultation with the P. & K.T.F., whose Unions were equally affected by the proposed wage reduction. There was a loyal response throughout the N.U.J. to the firm stand made by the executive, and as the state of national affairs began to improve the proposal faded into oblivion, and the minimum agreement remained intact. Advances gained during the present war are recorded in a later chapter.

It would be an interesting, but rather complicated, diversion for one with a statistical mind, to work out by how much journalists have benefited financially by the efforts of the Union. Richardson made an attempt in 1929. His calculation was that in the preceding eight years the Union had gained for its members at least £4,000,000. Dividing this astonishing total by the average number of members over the period he found that each one must be credited with nearly £1,000 more than he would have got without the Union, and in that period he had paid into the Union £24. Playfully he said he prepared this little sum for a branch dinner: it gave him an appetite. But it gave others the fear of indigestion, and they couldn't swallow it.

CHAPTER XIV.

LINKS WITH OTHER WORKERS: LONG STRUGGLES FOR AFFILIATIONS.

JUST as the inculcation of trade unionism was one of the hardest tasks of the pioneers, so for the first third of the Union's term of existence the liveliest polemics and the toughest debates centred in relations with other unions in the newspaper industry, while for a longer period still there has been contention about our attitude to the Institute of Journalists. "Affiliation," a word that at one time would set all tongues wagging and rouse combat at any branch meeting, has always been taken to mean alliance with "the printers" (a term which in general use included all sections of newspaper mechanical workers), and with the whole movement embodied in the Trades Union Congress. At the beginning masses of men had to be convinced that trade unionism was the best form of organisation for journalists; later the "single-track" unionists in the N.U.J.

had to convince their colleagues that linking up with the other unions in the industry was essential to the realisation of our aims. Both processes have been more of less completed, though it would not be true to say that even to-day every member of the union is a convinced and thorough-going trade unionist. Union achievements have, of course, increased the solidarity of the movement, and the sense of combination in all classes of workers, professional and mechanical, is much greater in 1943 than it was in 1907 or years thereafter.

Those years of affiliation controversy, 1913 to 1919, are full of interest to the student. The complex problem evoked dialectical skill of a high order from the opposing schools of thought, and as one who played a leading part in the fight, I have turned up the records of it with something of the zest which gave vigour to the cut and thrust of that long controversy. The supporters of affiliation had a strong case and a champion of wonderful skill and persistence in H. M. Richardson. Many who opposed them did so on grounds of expediency and not of principle. The Union was not strong enough, not sufficiently organised, and not ready to fulfil the obligations of affiliation, even if willing to accept the advantages. Thus at the first onset the big printers' unions were somewhat wary of an alliance with the untried Union. They themselves had had long experience of trade union efficacy, but the journalists were as yet an unknown quantity. It must be admitted, too, that there was still in the Union an element sympathetic to the ideals of the Institute, e.g., professional dignity and status. The trade unionists called it snobbery, and somehow or other Fleet-Street got tarred with this brush, and it took more than one protest against a "melodramatic myth" to remove the stain. The main points on both sides of the whole argument will appear in the record that follows. Subsequent affiliations, to the T.U.C., the Federation of Professional Workers, and the International Federation must also have their place in this chapter.

The first move towards affiliation was made at the Manchester A.D.M., 1913, at which it was resolved to approach the Typographical Association (T.A.), the London Society of Compositors (L.S.C.) and the Scottish T.A. to discuss the possibility of a working agreement. The Executive was asked to report the result to the branches in time for the next A.D.M. The mover argued that the Union could not conduct fights and hope to win if they fought simply as journalists. On a card vote the decision was a close thing—1,298 votes in favour to 1,106 against. The

Journal took up the question at once. For the opposition J. O'Donovan (Central London) said that a working arrangement meant the sympathetic strike, and the Union was not organised sufficiently for that. The mere suggestion had caused decided disquiet amongst the staunchest trade unionists in the Union. It was noted by Central London that while the L.S.C. was about 12,000 strong and the T.A. 16,000, the N.U.J. had not reached 4,000; and in the matter of "fighting funds" the comparison was still more unfavourable. Thus an agreement would be unfair to the stronger partners. Richardson's case for affiliation ran like this: Journalism in a sense is an unskilled trade, and all sorts of people drift into it; "any one who has passed the sixth standard may become a reporter, a sub-editor or leader writer"; typesetting is not unskilled; thus, while a newspaper can be maintained without the aid of trained journalists, it cannot be produced without the aid of trained compositors; admitted that a paper without the trained touch is a poor thing and would be beaten in competition; failing the sudden strike which would prevent the utilisation of non-union journalists or untrained men, the Union must either abandon hope of any great improvement in their lot, or ally themselves with the printer's unions; to reform the bad offices the Union must be able to stop not only the supply of competent copy, but also the machines which would set copy of any sort—hence the need for an arrangement between pressmen and printers.

At next years' conference (Liverpool, 1914) it was reported that the T.A. and the L.S.C. had been approached and were prepared to consider any particular case of dispute wherever support might be desired, but they were of opinion that the time was not opportune for a binding agreement. This left no more to be said for the time. At Sheffield A.D.M., 1915, Central London carried its proposal to approach proprietors' federations for the restoration of salaries reduced and an all-round increase, and under cover of this Richardson asked leave to move an amendment authorising action in conjunction with the P. & K.T.F. and the Electrical Trades Union. The delegates refused to give leave. Then Richardson opened up, in the avenue free to him as editor of the *Journal*, with a front page article "The Path of Adventure," arguing that unless the Union gained strength "by becoming one with the comps, the stereo. men and the machine men, by making their quarrels our quarrels, and ours' theirs'," things would get worse and not better. Central London formally

expressed its resentment at this argument for a defeated proposal. A few months later the staff of a newspaper "somewhere in England" (as we say in war-time) recovered £500 that had been deducted from salaries and secured other concessions. Commenting on this "fine achievement" Richardson made some amends: "I must confess the success shakes one of my firmest convictions. I have argued, perhaps with dreary iteration, that journalists, however well organised in themselves, can do little to improve their conditions of labour. It is now quite obvious, even to my prejudiced mind, that, unsupported by the compositors or anyone else, we can do much to remedy our grievances, given certain favourable conditions." Several "buts" followed, though it was a handsome admission as things went.

A prolonged correspondence in the *Journal* and the *Journalist* (which superseded it in May, 1917) gave the leaders of the Union a good idea of the trend of feeling in the rank and file. "One of them" complained bitterly in December, 1915, of increased work, higher cost of living, and salary reduced; "the Union is not strong enough to run a campaign successfully," he said. Yet the Union did conduct a fruitful war-bonus campaign. It was chiefly in the small offices where the bad conditions existed, and the hope was that unity with the printers would enable the N.U.J. to close down these haunts of injustice and oppression. Some put in a plea for a United Newspaper Workers' Union, later called the One Big Union idea. Protests were raised against the exhumation of the affiliation proposal "which was dead and buried," and appeals made to try the remedy of a complete organisation of working journalists. "C.P.R." (Robertson, Central London) was indignant at the use of the professional dignity argument against affiliation, and had no use for "mid-Victorian snobbery." He favoured the one all-embracing union, but admitted that it was not yet practicable. As a labour specialist in London journalism, his study of the position led him to conclude, however, that such a combine would be the final form of our development. The N.U.J. was eight years old, he wrote, with only about 40 per cent. of the working journalists of the country organised. It was part of an industry which had more than a score of unions catering for the different sections of workmen employed in it. All of them were craft unions, at one time fighting for their own hand, but they federated in the P. & K.T.F. and that was the real source of strength for the journalists. F. J. Mansfield declared "that a decision to conclude

an offensive and defensive alliance with the printers would in the present state of opinion in the Union, involve the risk of a calamitous cleavage." David Berry's alternative was a federation of professional, as distinct from trade, organisations, and he talked gaily of lawyers, doctors, chemists, teachers, surveyors, architects, and civil engineers all joining up—in fact his optimistic sweep included the women journalists, the Authors' Society and even the Institute—after we had persuaded the proprietors to withdraw from it! Then J. H. Harley brought his heavy guns to bear on the anti-affiliationists. He repudiated any idea that federation meant committal to "a mighty general strike," and said the N.U.J. would retain complete freedom of choice. If one of the federated unions struck the only obligation of the N.U.J. would be to stick to purely journalistic work and not do the work of any man on strike. One reply to this was the denial of Harley's right to speak for London. At the Glasgow A.D.M., 1916, a motion favouring a ballot on affiliation was defeated.

In 1917, at Manchester, the question was shelved. This time the lead came from Newcastle branch, for which J. N. Back moved that steps be taken to affiliate to the P. & K.T.F. Back was a great Union worker and a good tackler in the field of debate. He was one of the most persistent of the Union gamekeepers in tracking down clerical, or rather ministerial, poachers. The son of a Wesleyan minister, he had special knowledge of that denomination, and this doubtless accounted for his close watch on the actions of the Wesleyan Conference in the matter. On the N.E.C. Back did useful work until tuberculosis condemned him to exile at Davos, and his early death was a loss to the Union. His affiliation motion was opposed by Central London, in a reasoned amendment which, in view of the strong opposition in important centres of journalism, deprecated the introduction of this highly controversial question; and as an alternative asked the N.E.C. to take up the whole National Programme and seize the advantage of every possible opening for resort to courts of arbitration or conciliation. Foster, in moving this, asked for concentration on matters in which there was unity, and, on the merits of affiliation, suggested parallels to illustrate the lack of that "community of interest" essential to the success of federation. Meakin gained Central London's assent to an amendment postponing the issue of affiliation until the Union was in a position to consider the result of approaches to the proprietors with a view to establishing minimum standards; in the meantime branches to be urged to acquaint themselves

with the constitution and objects of the P. & K.T.F. Meakin admitted the danger in Fleet Street of forcing the federation scheme. His amendment was adopted.

Promptly after the Conference the Newcastle branch asked the N.E.C. to prepare a report on the aims and objects of the P. & K.T.F., but the executive replied that the resolution did not instruct them to move in the matter. The Emergency Committee felt that it would be improper to take the initiative, but the matter came within the province of the editor of the *Journalist*, "who is able to act without committing the Executive to any line of policy." Richardson improved the opportunity at once. He had a telling text for his screed: "When I went to get the *Journalist* out the other day, I discovered that I couldn't because the compositors were out—on strike. That is why the *Journalist* is late. It is also why the journalists will be too late. The newspaper proprietors in the Manchester district, after giving an increase of 4/- a week some months ago, have now given a rise of 8/6d. a week to lino. men and 7/6d. a week to compositors. Now the night lino. men are getting a minimum of £3 6s. a week. This is 6/- a week more than the minimum I have often heard suggested for this district for reporters." After arguing that the printers, by resolute action, had got something out of the pool which journalists might have got, he drew the moral: "We must endeavour to strengthen ourselves by gaining new members, by a stricter discipline within the ranks, by preparing to link up with the other newspaper workers, by presenting our schedules of wages to employers, and thereby moving as quickly as possible towards gaining some ground in the hope of holding it after the war. In my opinion we made a mistake at the A.D.M. in shelving the question of affiliation until after the joint approach to employers. The success of the comps., which means another obstacle in our way, confirms me in my view that we are too hesitant in taking the plunge." This drew a rebuke from Horace Thorogood (Central London): the editor was at fault in ridiculing the Union's deliberate policy, and the habit of "double doctrine" was making the *Journalist* a vehicle of positive mischief to the Union. Thorogood was not arguing the main question, or he might have countered Richardson's point about the pool by asking if the printers by affiliation would yield to the journalist what they themselves could obtain.

The process of informing the membership took the form in the October *Journalist*, 1917, of a full statement of the objects, benefits

and obligations of the P. & K.T.F. by Mr. A. E. Holmes, its secretary. The main objects were:

To combine for trade purposes and to secure unity of action amongst the various organisations in the printing and kindred trades; to endeavour to obtain uniform customs and hours of working in the different branches of the trade; to resist any attack made upon any branch of the trades in detail and the introduction of non-union labour during disputes; to prevent, as far as possible, the occurrence of strikes, and in the event of disputes arising to encourage the settlement of such disputes by amicable means; to recognise in future as fair employers only those who conform in every particular to the rules and customs of the whole of the several trades in the Federation. There was to be no interference by the Federation in the internal management of any union, nor with its rules and customs. One rule on the conduct of disputes read: "During a dispute no assistance shall be rendered to the employers concerned by any member or members of the federated societies by the execution of work outside their respective departments, and no assistance shall be given to the employees engaged in the work of those out in dispute." No strike of the Federation should be authorised without the consent of the Executive of each union being first obtained, and afterwards endorsed by the Federation Executive. In all Federation general forward movements the decision of each society should be subservient to majority votes of the whole of the societies comprised in the Federation. The primary object of the Federation was to improve conditions without resort to the strike and its negotiating power was declared to be its chief asset. The federated unions retained their autonomy, but it was found just to identify the interests of all sections before any serious dispute was entered upon. Mr. Holmes's conclusion was: "The members of the N.U.J. need not fear that if the Union joins the Federation they will be dragged into disputes willy-nilly. For the whole of the newspaper industry to be represented in the Federation would tend for peace."

The battle in the *Journalist* produced some first rate letters, which ran off into a variety of other issues, such as the privileges and duties of the journalist *qua* citizen and the comparative merits of London and provincial journalists from the trade union and other standpoints. The able and searching contributions of some of the Londoners, notably of a certain "T.F.", undoubtedly did much to destroy the Fable of the Snobs. There was an outspoken note in the London page for October, 1917, with an indirect bearing on the affiliation question, which is worth recalling. It dealt faithfully with Lord Burnham, proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*, and head of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association. At a recent deputation Lord Rhondda had stated that some workers were getting higher wages than ever before, and Lord Burnham took exception to the idea that that was the case with all classes, quoting specifically the printers. "Of course," the note commented, "it was hardly for him to refer to journalists, seeing that the *Daily Telegraph* was among the first London papers to cut wages on the editorial staff all round, and almost the last, if not quite the last, to restore them—not however, paying back arrears of deductions."

When the A.D.M. at Leicester in March, 1918, discussed the wages movement the good-natured rivalry between London and the Provinces led H. T. Hamson (West London) to fabricate a nickname which for a time had a vogue. As a champion of the weekly paper men he felt it was better to begin with the "bottom dog" than with "the princes of Fleet Street." South Wales took the field as the protagonist of affiliation and J. W. T. Ley was their spokesman. It was his first speech at an A.D.M., and we listened with interest to this newcomer with the pale and thoughtful face, then regarded by some as one of the "Reds" from the fiery Celtic fringe. I remember anticipating some allusions or similes from Dickens, for we knew that Ley had his Dickens almost by heart; but, if I do not err, there was only one casual reference. In a recent note, Ley brought out an interesting point: "You know how virile the South Wales Branch was in those days—a jewel in the Union Crown, as Foster once said. All through those years, 'Red' though the Branch was said (particularly by Central London) to be, it never had an officer who was not a Tory, except me, and I was a sedate Liberal. Pegg, T. A. Davies, Elliss Hughes, John Hopkins were all trebly-dyed Tories. Yet the Branch led the way in the P. & K.T.F., the T.U.C., and the wages movements!" Ley moved to instruct the N.E.C. to get into touch with the P. & K.T.F. and submit terms of affiliation to a ballot of the members within six months. He said the arguments for affiliation were overwhelming and experience in South Wales proved the strength of united trades council action. The mechanical workers could stop a paper, but the journalists could not.

Central London, Parliamentary and other branches united in support of an amendment instructing the N.E.C., at the close of the Whitley Council and the wages negotiations, either to call a special delegate meeting or take a poll of the membership, including members in the services, or take both courses, on the question if, in the opinion of the N.E.C., it was necessary to decide it before the next A.D.M. The mover, L. Dudeney (Parliamentary branch), said it was purely a question of policy and not of personal predilection. Some of them welcomed the growth in the linking-up movement, but wanted better evidence of the benefits before consenting to throw in the apple of discord. Back (Newcastle) and Williams (Carlisle) dallied with the taunt of snobbery and Foster (Central London) declared that there was not the least semblance of truth in it. Fleet Street was as democratic as

Newcastle. The heart of the subject seemed to be that journalists could not strike for themselves and wanted someone else to do their striking for them. If affiliation were carried then there would be a serious secession in London and the South, and it was very doubtful if the P. & K.T.F. would have them unless they went as a united body.

A " backbencher " who made a big impression was T. Dickson (Glasgow), who was to reach the chair of the Union and the floor of the House of Commons. He had a rare gift of homely and telling simile, and the conference was delighted when he said that the Whitley Council had been described as a red herring, but he would call it a vermilion whale. A debate worthy of the issue ended in a card vote, which carried the amendment by 1,803 to 845. Richardson moved a further amendment that an immediate ballot be taken to discover whether the members were in favour of affiliation at the discretion of the Executive, but this was rejected by 1,618 votes to 1,235, and the Central London amendment became the decision of the Conference. Roberts (Northampton) moved that permission be given for local federations of all newspaper workers who were trade unionists, but this was defeated.

So we entered the year 1918-1919—a testing year to myself personally, as I succeeded to the presidency at Leicester and was to preside at the decisive A.D.M. at the Easter of 1919, in London, when the final battle for affiliation was to be fought and won. As the G.O.C. of the Union I deemed it my duty to put the issue as plainly as possible before the whole membership ; thus in my tours of the kingdom, from Dundee to Plymouth, I devoted much attention to an analysis of the pros and cons. I never condemned the proposed alliance on principle, though I questioned the identity of interest of journalists and printers and asked whether the Union was fit and ready to carry out all the obligations of such a compact. From Foster, who joined the N.E.C. in my year of office, I received the valuable support of one well versed in economic theory and trade union history and practice, and the Parliamentary and Central London branches supplied formidable opponents, and also some advocates, of affiliation. The irony of my position was that Richardson, the arch champion of the project, was often my companion in presidential itineraries ; fortunately we both had a sense of humour, and more than once I made some such remark as : "Well Richy, I'm sorry, but it's the same old speech." He took the medicine well, and when we

were crusading together he was always loyal to me as his superior officer for the time being, though it would surprise me if he were not the while plotting how he could spike my guns in the *Journalist*, of which he still had editorial control.

One criticism of the anti-affiliationists from which I always felt myself immune was that of professional snobbery, or an attitude of patronage to the printers. From the first days of my journalistic career I had always maintained close touch with my mechanical colleagues, and for them as fine craftsmen and good fellows I ever had the highest regard. I lost no opportunity of opposing the idea that we journalists were powerless in our own resources. In the campaigning season of 1919 I was able to point to our successes, first with the Newspaper Federation, then with the N.P.A. in London, and lastly the winning of the weekly minimum from the Newspaper Society, as having all been won by the N.U.J. without outside aid. There may have been the threat, or a hint, of co-operation with the printers in the case last mentioned, but the effect of it is a matter of inference. The Union, at any rate, had made a good start in collective bargaining on its own account.

Assuring the Midlands at a Birmingham rally in December 1918, that the gospel of unionism was spreading so fast that I believed we should soon be so strongly organised that employers would respect the opinion of the N.U.J., I declared that the trade union spirit was growing in London and that even in Fleet Street opposition to affiliation was dwindling. To explain the reluctance in some quarters to joining the printers I gave five reasons which I found operative :—(1) it is a leap in the dark ; (2) difficulty of harmonising different sections owing to the absence of real unity of interest in practical ideals ; (3) journalists are on a different plane to the printers and have their own peculiar problems ; (4) the organisation of the N.U.J. is in a different stage of development from that of the printers ; (5) affiliation carries obligations as well as advantages and were we prepared to give the printers a *quid pro quo* for their support? The report of this event in the *Journalist* said that the President "fell among thieves." I left a nice new overcoat, which had cost me quite a lot of money, in the vestibule of the hotel where we met, and it had disappeared when we went to depart. Birmingham is not exactly a tropical spot about Christmas time and I felt the cold as I accompanied my friend J. B. Hobman (then editor of the *Birmingham Gazette*) home to tea in the suburbs. He lent me an overcoat for my journey back to London and with some hard pulling I just managed

to button it up. A few days later we had a laugh over the misfortunes of the itinerant preacher, when I climbed the wooden stairs of Hobman's office in Fleet Street to return the borrowed coat.

Events conspired to promote affiliation. In September 1918 a conference was convened by the P. & K.T.F. in London to discuss the setting up of a Whitley Council for the Newspaper industry. Representatives of the proprietors' organisations, the Federation and the N.U.J. decided to draft a scheme. This business brought the leaders of the Federation and the Union into touch. In the March following feeling in the Union was restive because of the failure of certain members of the Newspaper Society to observe the terms of the national minimum agreement (of January, 1919), and because the joint Committee to discuss difficulties between the N.S. and the N.U.J. had not met, owing to the illness of Mr. Frank Bird, the secretary of the N.S. Indignant resolutions demanding drastic action, sarcastic resolutions about the "alleged agreement," were reaching the head office and several branches sent in notices of motion for the forthcoming A.D.M. in favour of linking up with the P. & K.T.F. News of a successful two-hour strike against a defaulting firm spread like wildfire. Then the Institute intervened with a claim to join a Whitley Council. That meant mischief.

All the prevailing winds were fanning the flames of affiliation, and its advocates were in fine fettle when the A.D.M. assembled at St. Pancras, London, on April 18, 1919. Notices of motion from a number of branches were welded into one, reading: "That in view of the pending formation of a Whitley Council in connection with the newspaper industry, it be an instruction to the Executive Committee to take a poll within three months on the question of affiliation to the P. & K.T.F., and to proceed forthwith to effect the agreement with the Federation if the ballot authorises such action." The mover was P. E. Barnes ("Barnes of Exeter") and he expressed the general desire to get the question definitely settled once and for all. He admitted the good work done by the N.E.C. in getting wage concessions, but contended, amid dissent, that they had been got "on the backs of the Typographical Association." He denied that affiliationists were extremists. R. E. Yates (Manchester) reversed the secessionist argument by saying that if they did not carry the motion now the Union would lose many members in the North. He played a trump card when he read a letter sent by the secretary of the

Newspaper Society to the Shropshire and North Wales proprietors asking them to yield to the N.U.J. on the wages question and adding: " There is an extreme danger that if we do not follow this course the N.U.J. will become members of the Federated Printing and Kindred Trades, in which case their demands are likely to be much larger. They will be backed up, so that we shall not be in a very favourable position to resist them."

An amendment was moved by C. T. King (Parliamentary branch) in these terms: " That in view of the fact that the negotiations to set up a Whitley Council have not yet been concluded, and also that nothing has occurred during the past year to justify an alteration from the policy adopted by the A.D.M. of 1918, this A.D.M. decides to adhere to the resolution adopted last year." Wittily he defended his branch and exploded the snobbery idea, and then argued that the big range of salaries among journalists differentiated them from printers with their standard rates. None of the advocates of affiliation told them exactly what difference it would make. If they would explain what the difference would be " beyond having a strike when the printers wanted a strike and not being quite sure perhaps that they would strike when the journalists wanted to strike," it would help the opponents of affiliation very much. R. C. Spencer (at this time a member of Central London, on retirement from the *Manchester Guardian*) pointed out that a basic principle of the Whitley scheme was complete organisation on both sides. T. W. Bishop (Surrey) said they now recognised the logic of events and supported the proposal. Foster (Central London) said that branch meetings could not settle the question; only a ballot could do that. Central London could carry a resolution either for or against affiliation at almost any meeting. The laughter that greeted this sally by a Fleet-Street man against his own kith had scarcely subsided when the closure was applied. The result of the card vote was: For the amendment 118; against, 3,075—majority against 2,957. The minority was composed of two members of the Executive and the Parliamentary branch (116). Seventy-one branches voted in the majority. Meakin moved that the period within which the ballot should be taken be six months instead of three, but this was rejected. Central London delegates were at variance on this matter. with the result that two-thirds of their votes were cast against the amendment and one-third in its favour. It was decided to add after the word " ballot " in the resolution: " by a majority of three-fifths of those voting." With this

addition the original resolution was then agreed to amid cheers. A resolution was carried that no limit be placed on the ordinary trade union activities of the branches.

Executive action on the resolution was so expeditious that the date for the close of the ballot was May 31, but this had to be extended to June 21, because of the omission from the ballot paper of an instruction as to where it should be sent. The General Secretary's strong point never was detail and method, and he explained that he assumed that members would understand that papers were to be returned to the head office. The result of the ballot was: 1,192 in favour; 192 against. Central London had ventured a Parthian shot in the shape of a request for an extension of the ballot period, because the paper was "inadequate and misleading." It was pointed out that the paper did not give the name of the returning officer, the address to which it should be sent, the authorising resolution of the A.D.M., or the condition about a three-fifths majority. The prolongation of the voting period was conceded, and speedily the dissidents, like good democrats, settled down loyally to the work of the Union. Among the few resignations that took place none was regretted more than that of George Griffith, a valued member of the Parliamentary branch, who acted from a strict sense of duty.

Affiliation was applied for in July, reported the N.E.C., and the Federation immediately accepted us. Not more than a dozen resignations of membership took place; on the other hand there was at once a great influx of members, especially in the Central London branch. "The value of affiliation has already been demonstrated directly and indirectly. There can be no doubt that employers were influenced by the fact to meet us more readily than they were in days of isolation, and in one instance, the Federation Executive came directly to our aid and succeeded in re-opening negotiations, and enabling us to carry them to a satisfactory conclusion. In this case (that of the newsagency men in London) the attitude of the members concerned was so aggressive that had the Federation not been able to induce the employers to negotiate, there is little doubt that a serious stoppage would have taken place." The view was also expressed that affiliation induced the owners to agree to arbitration when the Union asked for it. In money terms the cost of affiliation in 1919 was £128. A comparison with the year 1941 is significant of the enlargement of Union activities. In the last account the expenditure side shows: Affiliation fees: P. & K.T.F., £295;

National Federation of Professional Workers, £68; Trades Union Congress, £85; National Council for Civil Liberties, £1 10s. In 1938 two other affiliations were recorded: International Federation of Journalists, £200; Labour Research Department, £3 3s. With the outbreak of war in 1939 the first of these two disappeared, but in 1941 the Union took the leading part in forming the International Federation of Journalists of Allied and Free Countries, contributing £25 to inauguration expenses and paying £31 1s. 6d. for the "foundation lunch."

Critical eyes watched the effects of affiliation and invective blazed up again in the autumn of 1919, when Richardson wrote a note on the scheme of "one big union," which was to be discussed at a Federation conference. The plan was to amalgamate all the various affiliated unions of the printing and allied trades. The General Secretary commented: "The present day tendency is towards industrial unionism, and we may have to prepare ourselves either to revert to our old position of isolation or to merge ourselves for offensive and defensive purposes in one big union," but "apparently no one is committed at present." This drew a fiery retort from R. S. Pengelly, one of the brilliant *Star* group, including Chattaway (afterwards the editor) and Horace Thorogood, who were then taking an active part in the work of the Central London branch. "Pen," as he was called by his many friends, hoped that members now recognised the "rare and refreshing fruits" of affiliation. "It is very soothing to know that 'apparently' no one is committed to it, but then there is that 'tendency,' and who are we to resist a 'tendency'?" After all the soothing "dope" administered to those who doubted the wisdom of affiliation, they were now faced with a determined effort to obliterate the N.U.J. and to submerge it in "one big Union." The writer was unnecessarily perturbed because the Executive, when invited by the P. & K.T.F. to be represented on the committee which was drafting a scheme of amalgamation, declined, and little more was heard of the scheme. At the same meeting the N.E.C. agreed to instruct branches to affiliate to local federations of the P. & K.T.F., and to urge the formation of house chapels "in offices where the trade union atmosphere is congenial."

It is not possible to pursue in detail from personal experience the history of affiliation in practice, for early in 1920, to my profound regret, I was forced by serious ill-health to withdraw from union work, except the formal duties of trustee, an office which

I have retained to this day. I had flouted urgent medical advice to take the step months before. Perhaps I may, purely as a record, and with the qualification that the praise might with greater justice have been accorded to some of my colleagues, quote what my own branch (Central London) too generously said on that occasion: "This is a heavy blow to the Branch and to the whole Union. We have not had a more vigorous and disinterested leader than F.J.M., nor one who has given so liberally of time and talent. The tribute of the chairman (T. Foster) had a note of personal sorrow in it, as one lamenting the end of a long journey in good comradeship, but free from pessimism, suggesting not regret over a loss, but abiding gratitude for splendid service given at great personal sacrifice."

In the terrific shock of the General Strike in 1926 our commitment to the P. & K.T.F. inevitably came under review and official definitions on crucial issues involved in the strike were demanded. The Union was so deeply stirred that a ballot on the continuance of affiliation was taken. About half the total membership voted, there being 1,532 in favour of continuance and 756 against. Clearly the Union had been severely shaken by the General Strike, but that story is told in Chapter XVII. Richardson had in an appeal on the eve of the ballot, "not as general secretary, but as one of the founders of the Union," declared: "Before the war and right up to 1919, when we became affiliated to the P. & K.T.F. the most we could get as a minimum was about £3 a week for a fully-qualified journalist. Now we can get at least £4 7s. 6d. That advantage is due, in my opinion (and I have had the honour to be the chief negotiator for the Union) to the fact that we are closely linked up with the compositors, the machine minders, the stereotypers, the publishers and all the other workers in the industry . . . From the moment we became affiliated the attitude of federated employers completely changed towards us. Up to that time we were the bottom dog of the newspaper industry, to whom a bone might occasionally be 'recommended.' After affiliation we became a body that had to be treated with respect, with which negotiations must be conducted in a formal and thorough manner, and with which agreements must be made . . . It is impossible to be precise upon the point, but I am certain myself that had we not been affiliated to the Federation the members would be at least £250,000 a year worse off than they are (December, 1926)." A "bull point" for the affiliationists was that if the Union quitted the Federation it would no longer be

eligible for membership of the Joint Industrial Council, whose value everybody admitted. As one who in early days emphasised the difficulties of affiliation, I endeavour in this record to give the fullest expression to the views of those who favoured what became the settled policy of the Union. A note sent me by T. Jay, of Bristol, is the retrospect of a leading pro-affiliationist:

With affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. the Union took its first and, in my opinion, its most important step. At last we had moved into our proper place. With other members of the N.E.C. and individual members throughout the country, I had always advocated affiliation and long before I took office as President (1921) I was doing general propaganda work throughout the provinces. The Union could never be the effective organisation it should be until its members were prepared to take their place side by side with the craft workers in the industry. This was so essential a step in our organisation that it was difficult to understand the opposition to it. Every A.D.M. a vote on the question would be taken and I remember with pride the keenness of the South Wales branch on this matter, ably led by T. A. Davies, often supported by J. W. T. Ley, both to become Presidents of the Union later. There was much rejoicing that afternoon when the resolution was carried, for somehow we knew that that battle was over. A great progressive step had been taken, although there were colleagues, those in office and also individuals throughout the country who, speaking with their voices on tiptoe, gave us ghostly warnings that this was a step that would "split the Union from top to bottom." But we had heard that one before, for many members of the Union seemed to keep that phrase wrapped in cellophane on their desks.

Affiliation was not merely an important step from our point of view, but the P. & K.T.F. was very glad to have our application. I can say from my meetings with most of the leaders in the printing trade unions, that we were indeed welcome in the Federation and for me personally it laid the foundations of splendid friendships still existing and many that will always be a glorious and happy memory. At Bristol we soon got busy by linking up with the local federation. It was, I thought, necessary that our local members should get to know the craft workers socially as well as professionally, and I had always been in the closest contact with them. We organised a convivial gathering of printing trade workers and journalists which did much to make us "friends for life," as it were. I was sent as representative to the local P. & K.T.F. and very soon was elected its President, a position I held for many years. Never have I enjoyed working with men so much. They were a forthright body of really keen trade unionists and they were always prepared to make a stand for their principles. As to the effect of affiliation it was in my opinion most marked. For some years we had been fighting for the first thing in a trade union, the principle of collective bargaining. Newspaper proprietors and their organisations were not easy to contact and would not dream of making agreements of a national character, but there came a noticeable improvement after affiliation and the later records of achievements of the Union tell their own story.

In surveying the period of twenty-four years in which the Union has been working in alliance with the printers I feel in some ways like Rip Van Winkle must have felt when he returned from the Catskill Mountains. But not entirely so, for that period has not been one of oblivion for me as it was for the hero of Washington Irving's legend. Although I have not been a regular passenger on the "inner circle" of executive activity, I have in the somewhat ornamental, though at times essential, office of trustee, kept

in touch with policy and events by means of N.E.C. minutes. This, of course, is not comparable with the experience of those earlier years when I had the privilege of an active share in the "toil and sweat" which won recognition and rewards for the Union. For the purpose of this chronicle I have the judgment and testimony of colleagues on whom executive responsibilities have fallen in the affiliation era. Chief among these for the first eighteen years was H. M. Richardson. Time and again before his death in December, 1936, he wrote and spoke impressively of the enormous value of P. & K.T.F. backing in our negotiations. His successor, the present General Secretary, has been no less emphatic in similar testimony on an even larger experience of the same power at work, and his views have found ample corroboration from Union leaders. For instance, at the A.D.M., 1928, H. A. Raybould, the retiring President, spoke of the continued difficulty of getting redress in the matter of working hours and holidays, and added that through the good offices of the P. & K.T.F., another conference had been agreed to by the Newspaper Society. When at last, in 1930, the proprietors definitely accepted the principle that "every journalist shall be entitled normally to one-and-a-half days a week or three days a fortnight free from duty of any description," Richardson wrote the story of the tortuous negotiations which produced that limited concession, and attributed the success to the conciliatory genius of the Joint Industrial Council and the persistent pressure of the Union and P. & K.T.F. Speaking from the chair at the 1930 A.D.M. H. D. Nichols said the moral and intellectual support of the Federation had been invaluable, while some of their friends were offering more than moral support, of which they would do well to take advantage. In his presidential address at the 1942 A.D.M. Foster made a strong appeal for loyalty to our great trade union affiliations: "It is only by keeping to the true line of trade unionism that we shall be able to pull our weight in all efforts for economic betterment." Remembering that when affiliation issues were first debated Foster, always a trade unionist who maintained that the acid test of union loyalty was the readiness to strike if the occasion demanded it, kept an open mind on some of the vital points in dispute, one is naturally disposed to attach special significance to his later pronouncement, based on the hard realities of experience.

It is essential to a fair record, however, to note one of two faint creakings in the machinery of affiliation, during the progress of this war. They do not touch the fundamental principle of the

alliance, which is, of course, the settled policy of the Union, but they illustrate the contentions of a former day as to the differences in character and custom between journalists and their mechanical partners. War agreement No. 2, of September, 1940, contained provisions as to overtime when air raid emergencies made suspension of work necessary. The agreement was a general one made by the Federation, with the British Federation of Master Printers and the Newspaper Society, and although the terms could not apply to journalists no exception was made in relation to the N.U.J. In a circular pointing this out C. J. Bundock observed: "It must be remembered that a Federation agreement covers the general conditions of all unions in the industry, and not the specific conditions in one Union." When the Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers' Union demanded re-grading, that had no sort of parallel in journalism. A similar position existed with regard to apprentices, and the Executive found differentiation necessary. That is one case in which, in view of the variety of trades and conditions represented in the P. & K.T.F., it is desirable for the N.U.J. to secure its own separate agreement. These disparities have given rise to a demand in recent times for independent action by the N.U.J. In April, 1941, the N.E.C. found that War Agreement No. 4, dealing with arrangements for the transfer of employees to different towns, was not applicable to N.U.J. members, and had to seek a clause in a preceding agreement as being more appropriate.

The difficulty of all the units in the Federation marching in line became accentuated when the larger issues of war wages were confronted. The practice of the Federation is to hold a conference of executives of all their affiliated unions when proposals for a general agreement reach a decisive stage. One such conference was held in July, 1941, when the only war increase secured had been the award of 5/- a week by the National Arbitration Tribunal. A scheme of graded advances, weighted in favour of the lower paid sections of workers, was evolved, and Bundock found it necessary to point out that journalists, who had five classifications of wages, could not fit into a grading scheme. The proposal most suited to the N.U.J. would give a flat rate increase of 6/- per week, and that was not what the N.U.J. was asking for. He had the utmost admiration for the negotiating abilities of the Federation officials, and was sure they would do nothing to edge out any Union which might find it difficult to fit in. If the application was to be based on grades the journalists would be

left out, and if it was left to the journalists and the employers to settle their own affairs that would not be a Federation movement in which every constituent part was entitled to equal representation. Other Unions had to face problems similar to that of which Bundock thus spoke.

Consequent on dissatisfaction with the refusal of the employers to give special consideration to the claims of the lower-paid members, in War Agreement No. 6, no fewer than six of the 16 unions in the Federation made their own individual approach to the employers. The latter, in a circular to their constituent bodies, said: "It is understood that the Unions are entitled under the constitution of the P. & K.T.F. to conduct wage negotiations independently. To deal, however, with the Unions separately, instead of with the P. & K.T.F. acting on behalf of all of them, is clearly going to involve a greater expenditure of time and energy, when both are so precious." One outstanding fact about the Federation membership is that a great part of its concerns have to do with general, or "jobbing" printing, as distinct altogether from newspaper production. It may be of interest to give the list of unions affiliated to the Federation. The following is for 1940, the figures showing the membership of each union, yielding a grand total in the Federation of 206,149:

National Union of Printing, Bookbinding, and Paper Workers		81,240
Typographical Association		39,384
National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants		26,956
London Society of Compositors		13,996
Amalgamated Society of Lithographic Printers		7,780
Society of Litho. Artists, Designers, Engravers and Process Workers		8,300
National Union of Journalists		7,095
Scottish Typographical Association	5,600	
" " " Auxiliary Section	1,214	
" " " Female Section	186	
Total		7,000
Printing Machine Managers' Trade Society		4,670
National Society of Electrotypers and Stereotypers		4,199
Society of Women Employed in the Bookbinding and Kindred Trades		2,259
Association of Correctors of the Press		1,455
Monotype Casters' and Typefounders' Society		804
Pattern Card Makers' Society		347
National Union of Press Telegraphists		628
Map and Chart Engravers' Association		36

At a conference of executives on a war bonus agreement a representative of the Scottish T.A. declared that he was instructed by his Executive to say that they would not allow the Federation to interfere with their working and no matter what the decision was, they could not hold themselves to be bound by it. The

custom of independent negotiation by each Union survives strongly in London, and at a conference in November, 1941, the chairman stated that it had never been the practice to make collective agreements as far as the London newspapers were concerned. They were all individual agreements and the intention was to maintain that principle. This attitude found much support at various N.U.J. meetings in the latter half of 1941. In September Central London was dissatisfied with the delay of the P. & K.T.F. in approaching the N.P.A. for a wage increase to meet the rising cost of living, but in view of the small arbitration award of 5/- already obtained a disappointing result was feared of a new move. At a meeting of several Scottish branches at Glasgow in October the President (T. Foster) said the new movement of the P. & K.T.F. did not meet with the approval of many members, but he appealed for unity within the Federation. Bundock said it was unfortunate that the Federation grading policy meant that all N.U.J. members were included in the lowest increase demanded, namely 6/- per week. This was definitely causing dissatisfaction in the Union, he admitted, but he urged loyalty to the Federation. A similar appeal came from D. M. Elliot, who was critical of the Executive's policy in becoming a party in the joint application to the employers. Manchester was actively critical, too. R. J. Finnemore and H. D. Nichols laid the facts of the wages movement before the members, but much divergence of opinion was shown in the interpretation of the facts. The branch decided to urge the N.E.C. to act independently in any future wages claim. The necessary counterblast came from the General Secretary in the *Journalist* of December, 1941. Here are a few points:

> Let us reflect on the immense importance to us of our affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. We derive tremendous strength from that. Those of our members who are always thinking in grandiose terms not very closely related to reality say we should have made our approach for a war bonus independently of our colleagues in the Federation. In the present circumstances in which all disputes go for final settlement to arbitration, I cannot imagine a more shortsighted attitude . . . It is not easy to get increases from the National Arbitration Tribunal, especially upon wages that already reach a certain figure. National policy is against wages chasing prices. United in the Federation and in negotiation with the employers in our industry, without reference to the Arbitration Tribunal we have increased the 5/- to 10/-.

The spirit of this argument prevailed in the N.E.C. When the grading scheme was launched, involving a bonus of only 6/- for all journalists, it was moved that the Union should contract out of the P. & K.T.F. application and discuss a scheme of its own,

but by 13 votes to five the Executive resolved that "while expressing strong disappointment at the scale adopted in the application for wages increases by the P. & K.T.F., nevertheless, as loyal members of the Federation, we accept the proposals."

It should be clearly understood that the executive of the P. & K.T.F. is always careful to preserve the individual rights of all its unions. Affiliation does not debar any union from making its own agreements, and it is generally accepted that in normal times, owing to the differences in working conditions and rates of pay between journalists and the printing trades, the best policy for the N.U.J. is to go forward separately with the approval and backing of the Federation. Such a policy would eliminate the frictions and discontents of the war period, but the one indispensable condition of its success will be a strong endowment of the whole membership with the spiritual forces of trade unionism.

Mr. A. E. Holmes, C.B.E., secretary of the P. & K.T.F., has just retired after 30 years work in that post, and he is succeeded by Mr. J. Fletcher, who relinquishes his appointment as general secretary of the Typographical Association. A shrewd and capable negotiator, with great gifts of tact and patience, Mr. Holmes has full knowledge of the working of the alliance between the N.U.J. and the Federation. Asked for his views he writes:

I am certain that the N.U.J. strengthened its position by affiliation to the Federation, but I could see from the first that there might be some difficulty in harmonising the interests of all those unions which cater for purely mechanical operations and those which cater for the professional side of the printing industry. There have been occasions when it has not been possible to carry along the interests of the two referred to, inasmuch as the problems have been of that character which apply to the mechanical side and not to the professional. It has to be borne in mind that the former have been in existence for many many years, in some instances over 100 years, and consequently their problems have become more easily defined than those which belong to the professional side of the business. I am certain, however, that affiliation to the Federation has given power to the N.U.J. The strength of large and well-organised unions has always been exercised in favour of the smaller, and in some instances, less organised sections of the trade. This is exemplified by the fact that the constitution of the Federation applies equally well to the small sections as to the large, and on all occasions has been applied in that manner. The general result of the affiliation of the N.U.J. has been that the employers' side recognises the right of the N.U.J. to associate with other affiliated unions in the Federation and applies the same consideration to matters which affect them as to any other affiliated union.

As a footnote to the above it may be mentioned that in 1845 the metropolitan and provincial societies of compositors united in the National Typographical Society. This broke up after numerous local strikes, but in 1849 most of the provincial branches joined in the Typographical Association, though Manchester and

Birmingham for some time stood aloof. The London men formed their own L.S.C. in 1848. The Scottish T.A. dates from 1852. Some amusing tales are told of the rivalries of the L.S.C. and the T.A. in that long period when the T.A. card did not "run" in London. A witty speaker at a recent Federation conference said: "It took a great War to bring the relations of the T.A. and the L.S.C. to the present high standard of excellence. The L.S.C. has at last confessed to recognising that the ability of a printer in John O'Groats is equal to that of a printer in London."

Careful inquiry among those now in active charge of executive matters enables me to close the review of this subject with a summary of the position as it exists to-day. By virtue of its affiliation the Union has at its disposal the machinery of the Joint Industrial Council. A very high percentage of disputes, not merely the big disputes between a union and an employers' body, but the much more frequent smaller disputes in single offices caused by breaches of agreements, are settled without strife by the Conciliation Committees of the J.I.C. To be deprived of this means of conciliation would be a grievous injury. Two illustrations of the help of the Federation itself during this War may be given. For many years the Union has been striving to obtain an agreement on hours and holidays in the provinces from the Newspaper Society, but the Society was adamant against all appeal. The machinery of affiliation and conciliation all proved ineffectual to produce anything stronger than a recommendation. Then in 1930 something better came. The Union and the N.S. signed a joint memorandum embodying the principle of a five and a half day week, or an eleven-day fortnight, but stating that the application of it should be subject to local accommodation. A joint committee was to "adjust" any alleged departures from the principle. The length of the working day or week was still undefined, and as to holidays there was only the cold comfort of a sentence in the memorandum confirming "the principle that every journalist is entitled to an annual holiday with pay." There the subject was left for years. Soon after the outbreak of the present war the Union tried again, but the N.S. declined to meet the Union, saying that no useful purpose would be served. The Union reported the refusal to the P. & K.T.F., who sent a strong deputation to the N.S. to say in effect that their reply was not good enough. Then the N.S. agreed to meet the N.U.J., and the latter obtained an undertaking to make an agreement within twelve months of the end of the war.

The other case was that of the London papers published in Manchester. The proprietors would not consent to meet the Union for discussion until the influence of the P. & K.T.F. led them to change their minds. If the N.U.J. had been ploughing a lonely furrow it is difficult to imagine how such results could have been gained short of striking, and that, of course, would have been dubious and dangerous in war time. Clearly, for the N.U.J. the resort to affiliation has proved the wiser policy, and there can be no doubt that the Union as a whole is fully persuaded in that sense. I have written of " battles long ago," and now if, like the members of the B.B.C. Brains Trust, I may claim the luxury of " second thoughts," I am ready to admit that in the circumstances of to-day I should be an affiliationist if the issue were again presented. That possibility, however, may be ruled out. The current of the Union stream of conviction, apart from the small surface ripples already noted, flows decidedly in the opposite direction. Whereas in the past our relations with the P. & K.T.F. have largely been left to the headquarters, there is now a marked tendency to draw much nearer to the other unions in the localities, and particularly in the offices. In several recent cases N.U.J. members have taken the initiative in forming federated house chapels, which deal with matters of common interest to the members of all the unions in an office, and support the legitimate claims of the chapel of any one union. An instance is furnished by Birmingham at the time of writing ; a question about holidays induced one chapel in an office to take the lead in the formation of a federated house chapel, which is now in being.

There has been no difficulty, even under the exceptional strains of war, I am assured, because of the obvious fact that some Federation agreements deal with matters that have no application to journalists. Those that do not apply, or the parts that do not apply, the N.U.J. naturally does not attempt to apply, and the whole position is well understood. There has been no dispute difficulty or disagreement between the Newspaper Society and the Union in this matter. An example to the contrary may be given, showing the beneficial use of an agreement with only a partial applicability. As the N.U.J. has as yet no agreement with the N.S. on holidays and hours in the provinces it might be said that that is purely a matter between the individual employer and his staff. In the main that is true, but recently the General Secretary of the N.U.J. in talking to the managing director of a newspaper group who had issued an instruction about holidays, pointed out that as we had

no agreement the question must rest on the custom of the particular office, and was able to add that "under War Agreement No. 3 any variation of existing practices must be by consultation and agreement between the chapel and the management." That talk was productive of a result very useful to N.U.J. members in the employ of that group.

There is another effective case in point. The Unions concerned in the production of London papers recently agreed with the N.P.A. that, where the necessity arose by shortage of men, the eleven night or day fortnight might be suspended by agreement between a management and a Union, and twelve nights or days substituted. The N.U.J. was affected. The provision in this War Agreement was that for the twelfth day or night the "jobbing rate" would be paid. As the N.U.J. had no such rate it became necessary to interpret that provision. Consultation between the N.U.J. and the N.P.A. resulted in the agreement that to journalists who worked the extra day "at least two guineas shall be paid." That is more than a day's pay to any who may be working on the London minimum of nine guineas a week, or indeed any working for less than eleven guineas. This is a valuable point gained. It was the beneficial application to the N.U.J. of a general agreement affecting all ranks in the P. & K.T.F. If the N.U.J. had not, as a constituent member of the Federation, been a party to the agreement, it is possible that journalists might have been expected to be on duty six days or nights a week instead of five-and-a-half without extra pay, because N.U.J. agreements have not yet embraced any general recognition of overtime. So to sum up in a sentence, our affiliation has proved to be a demonstration of the strength of unity in diversity, in which variations of vocation have been accommodated in the machinery of federation, and the vital bond of union maintained in all matters of general principle and common interest.

The pathway of affiliation to the Trades Union Congress is strewn with ballot papers. A small fortune must have been spent by the Union in printing and postage in this direction, and certainly a vast amount of energy has been expended in disputation during the 30 years that have passed since the issue was first presented to an annual conference. Advocates of the policy have always insisted on the definite link with the whole trade union movement as a natural and logical step for journalists banded together in a trade union; opponents have based their opposition broadly on the unfairness of involving a membership divided in

political faith in support of a body actually or implicitly in alliance with one party in the state, i.e., the Labour Party; and also on the fear of entanglement in a general strike or some big industrial dispute. The result of the long controversy is that the Union now stands affiliated to the T.U.C., which has strengthened its position greatly in these days of war, and the fears that in former years swayed Union opinion have receded into a dim background. Let us trace the movement from its beginning in 1912. At the Manchester A.D.M. in that year West Cumberland and East Lancashire moved that steps should be taken to join the T.U.C. The mover for the former used the quaintly altruistic argument that the Union would raise the Congress in the estimation of the country. A more businesslike contention was that affiliation would mean a great accession of strength to the Union's bargaining power. London, Kent and Surrey opposed, the voice of Manchester was divided and the delegates "by an overwhelming majority" decided that the time was not ripe. Spencer (the first President), as always, was in favour. Assembled in 1913, again at Manchester, delegates debated a motion by Bradford that the Executive be requested seriously to consider, at an early date, the question of affiliation to the T.U.C. and the desirability of branches being affiliated to local Trades Councils. It was urged that if journalists with a grievance were forced to strike on any paper, the paper could probably be brought out by blackleg labour, and the journalists should be in a position to appeal to other departments for help in forcing the issue. One supporter thought the influence of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of the Congress would be very useful. The motion was defeated. At the Liverpool Conference of 1914 Burnley's proposal for affiliation was defeated. For Central London Mansfield said that while not judging the question for all time, they wanted first to complete the National Programme and try the weapon of negotiation. Spencer made a new point, that while strongly favouring affiliation he thought that by joining local Trades Councils branches would find themselves dragged into disputes of which they knew nothing.

After a year's respite, the subject dominated Union discussions in 1916. The Parliamentary Branch led the opposition, "deprecating the renewal of the agitation for affiliation in view of the critical position of the Union, due to the number of men on military service and the necessity for maintaining a large membership to meet post-war problems." The second part of

the resolution roused much contention and protest; it ran, "in the event of any affiliation scheme being adopted, the Parliamentary Branch, in view of the great opposition to affiliation at present existing in London, call a conference of the London branches to consider immediate action, including the question of branch dissolution." Central London had a vigorous discussion. It was an unusually large assembly and C. P. Robertson suggested that it was a "packed meeting." Others accused the Parliamentary Branch of "bullying tactics." The Central branch, like its Parliamentary colleagues, expressed itself in deprecation —it always seems correct in formal issues to "deprecate" the action of the other side. The resolution spoke of controversial questions and critical junctures and expressed the belief that if affiliation were carried the result would be "to divide and cripple the Union." In reply to the ascription of influence at Westminster to the T.U.C. it was claimed that the Union had a superior weapon in its Parliamentary Branch. Foster reasoned that common technique and community of interest were necessary for common action, and neither existed as between mental and manual workers. The London and Home Counties District Council almost unanimously opposed affiliation. Manchester, true to type, supported the policy, but critics pointed out that only twenty were present at the meeting which decided it. This method of derogation, however, was often a double-edged weapon. It came to be used against Central London Branch, whose meetings seemed fated to grow smaller as its membership grew larger. As for the Parliamentary Branch, although there is a new outlook on trade union solidarity to-day, it is, I believe, true to say that the branch never fully recovered from the original set-back caused by T.U.C. affiliation. It spoiled the solid-membership idea and took the edge off the paying keenness of those who stood fast, the effect being seen in the increase of arrears. This may prove a passing phase as Union strength grows.

Interest had been keyed up to high pitch by the time of the Glasgow A.D.M., 1916, when South Wales and Manchester led off with a motion "that the N.E.C. be asked to take immediate steps to secure affiliation of the Union to the T.U.C." Gayton spoke for S. Wales and Charles for Manchester. The former (whom Watts complimented on making the ablest speech for affiliation that he had heard) asked what the Union would do when the employers ceased to compromise and became hostile? His own reply was the the Union would then be reduced to

impotence—he said that with the recollection of the "York fiasco." With T.U.C. backing the Union in a dispute could make a more powerful appeal to public opinion and establish something in the nature of a boycott. F. J. Mansfield moved as an amendment the Central London resolution already noted. He made it clear that Central London made no threat to secede, but said they were fighting a difficult battle for the Union in Fleet Street, in face of the competition of the Institute with its superior financial benefits. W. Veitch spoke from some years of experience in the Gallery when he seconded in terms of cool reasoning. Labour influence in Parliament, he asserted, was largely overestimated. Would the Union get the sympathy of Labour M.P.'s, who supplemented their salaries by writing for the papers and acting as pseudo-journalists; would those men support the Union in any attempt to keep journalism for journalists?

Watts protested against members discussing their affairs in the *Newspaper World* under the heading "A Union crisis." The proper place for members' views was their own *Journal*. Desiring to be a peace maker he admitted that on this question he was suspect, but protested that he had never written on it. He suggested that having ventilated the issue S. Wales and Manchester might withdraw the resolution. They had about a thousand men out of the country on service who would have a grievance if there were legislation on a matter which divided the Union, during the absence of those who, in a few years to come, would be the men controlling affairs. He was anxious not to imperil the Union, the while admitting that he was dancing attendance on expediency. Haslam declared that members in Manchester were saying "unless you take this practical course we will come to the stage of saying that the Union is no longer any use to us or anyone else." Lethem said in the early days there was a very stiff battle all over the country to get journalists to accept the trade union principle at all. As a pioneer of that principle he always pointed out that though it meant forming a union like other unions, their methods must differ from those of other unions, because their circumstances differed and they must work out their own salvation. He did not object to affiliation on principle, but the question with him was, is it any practical use to us? Would it advance the cause for which the Union had been formed? He was compelled to answer in the negative. The time had not yet come for it. After these impressive appeals from the two men who carried most weight in the Union the motion was withdrawn by consent.

In his historical chapter on this event Richardson says it was not improbable that the motion would have been carried if it had gone to the vote. The 1918 A.D.M. rejected a motion by Exeter in favour of affiliation, " such action being considered absolutely vital to the safeguarding of the future interests of working journalists," and the conference also defeated a plan for the local federation of newspaper workers.

The year 1920 witnessed the success of the T.U.C. movement, and our Welsh compatriots do not cease to remind us that Cardiff was the scene of the victory. By this I mean the winning of the assent of the A.D.M. and the ordering of a ballot. This time Central London put its critics to confusion by itself proposing the fateful resolution, backed up by South Wales and other branches. A consolidated resolution was submitted as follows: " That, following on the affiliation of the N.U.J. to the P. & K.T.F., most of whose component societies are affiliated to the T.U.C., it follows that the N.U.J. should, for the purpose of direct representation, directly affiliate to the T.U.C., and that the N.E.C. is hereby requested to apply for such affiliation, subject to approval on a ballot of the members by a majority of three-fifths of the members voting." C. P. Robertson, the mover, while denying that the T.U.C. was a political organisation, said that it was almost impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule as to where political and industrial matters divided. He contended that the N.U.J. would be much stronger inside the T.U.C., and made the interesting prediction that affiliation might be the means of bringing about an international federation of journalists. J. E. Brown, who had been speedily reconciled to the P. & K.T.F. link, though previously a strong opponent, expressed satisfaction at the conversion of the " cuff and collar brigade " (otherwise the South) to the T.U.C. project. Newcastle proposed an amendment postponing the matter for twelve months " pending the development of the Federation of Professional and Technical Associations." A card vote yielded a majority of 2,830 for the Central London motion.

The decision had several repercussions. First there was the inevitable snag in the ballot procedure. The N.E.C. had to extend the voting period one week beyond the date stated on the paper " in order to give members a full opportunity of considering the matter in all lights." Richardson in the *Journalist* spoke of a " regrettable misunderstanding " about the ballot, and said that the point at issue was one of fact; no question of principle was

involved. What it was I am now unable to say. Acting on a resolution of the Cardiff A.D.M. protesting against the competition of non-journalists the N.E.C. had asked the T.U.C. for an interview on the question of trade union leaders supplying news to papers. Mr. J. T. Brownlie, chairman of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, had been taken to task by his executive for an alleged arrangement with the Hulton Press to act as " Labour Adviser." He had asserted that he claimed " the right which all representative Labour men possess, and no trade unionist disputes, to discuss either in articles or in interviews questions of general interest to the movement or the community; to express my personal opinions on them and to take payment when payment is offered." A *Journalist* editorial retorted that our Union most strongly objected to that attitude, and that Mr. Brownlie and other trade union leaders could always voice their views through a working journalist. The Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. in his reply to our executive's request, stated that that committee could not meet deputations from non-affiliated unions. The N.E.C. resolved to wait until affiliation was accomplished and then place a motion on the T.U.C. agenda.

Meanwhile the ballot was in train and the Parliamentary Branch was fighting a determined rearguard action. After three branch meetings devoted to discussion of the subject they took a whole page advertisement in the *Journalist* to expose the political perils of the proposal: " they appeal to all members of the Union who support the views that journalists, on account of the character of their vocation, should not be affiliated in their organised capacity with any body having political aims or political bias in any direction whatsoever, not to fail in the ballot to record their votes against affiliation with the T.U.C. or any other body which is in anyway allied with politics." The opposition evidently had some effect on the voting, which was: for affiliation 1,380, against 816. There were 20 spoiled papers, and thus 2,216 votes were cast out of a membership of 4,509. The figures gave a surplus in the majority of 63 over the three-fifths required. A stupid mistake in the official announcement of the result in the *Journalist* duly kept up the blundering record: it was the statement that " the necessary *two-thirds* majority was obtained with a surplus of 63."

When the Trades Union Congress met at Portsmouth a little later the N.U.J. was represented by J. E. Brown (President) and H. M. Richardson (General Secretary). This first experience of

a Congress was not very happy. The Union's motion of protest got into strange company, for it was tacked on to a motion by the Horticultural Workers' Union on the prevention of unfair competition. Our portion called for steps "to end the growing practice of trade unionists and other Labour leaders competing with professional journalists in supplying for gain, news to newspapers and news agencies." An amendment was carried referring the matter to the Parliamentary Committee. Our report also stated that a remark by Mr. John Bromley, Secretary of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, "was loudly resented at the press table, but no apology was made either then or later. More will be heard of the matter in the future." The objectionable statement was this: "It is necessary for every trade unionist at this Congress to put up with the general misrepresentation, vilification and abuse of the capitalistic press. We understand it. We know, unfortunately, that the brains of the members of the Journalists' Union here are bought and paid for to be used against members of their own class."

In September, 1920, Richardson was obliged to note with regret several resignations from the Parliamentary Branch as a result of the affiliation. Some of the most active members, he said, had felt compelled to cut adrift, but as many more had joined his lament was sentimental rather than practical. He made a lofty humanitarian appeal to the deserters. Had they thought that in leaving the Union they were forfeiting the privilege of helping unemployed comrades, because of a vague dread of supporting a political policy they might disapprove? Strangely, for H.M.R., the argument was switched over from the economic to the eleemosynary. "How insignificant are the dangers that may accrue from affiliation compared with the tragedies that are being perpetrated daily in the Provinces and in the Street of Misadventure." The Secretary was now in closer touch with this Street, for the head office of the Union was transferred there from Manchester in June, 1920.

Appeals to the 1921 A.D.M. at Newcastle to withdraw from the T.U.C. were ineffective, a card vote registering 3,241 in favour of continued affiliation and 596 against. The 1922 Conference heard a great deal about the disquieting growth in arrears of contributions, chiefly in Central London. J. E. Brown said that in two years the Union had lost 806 members and no good and tangible explanation could be given, but it must be remembered that other unions were losing wholesale. J. H.

Robertson (Parliamentary Branch) declared that a large proportion of the 800 secessions were the effect of affiliation. Parliamentary Branch proposed withdrawal from the T.U.C., but this was defeated by an overwhelming majority.

The political implications of affiliation were raised in an acute form in the summer of 1922. The Executive had a request from the P. & K.T.F., and the T.U.C. for the support of the Union for the *Daily Herald*, the Labour organ which under the new editorship of Hamilton Fyfe was making a bold advance. It was decided to ballot the members on the question of taking a levy of 2d. per head per annum in support of that paper. The vote was: For the levy 399, against, 738. There was much comment on the apathy shown by the small vote—about 25 per cent. of the total membership. After the N.U.J. declined to subsidise the *Herald* the T.U.C. decided to raise the affiliation contribution of the unions from one penny to threepence per member per annum, and this of course was taken as a direct move to support the *Herald*. At the A.D.M. in 1923, South Wales led the discontents with a motion declaring: "It is inimical to the interests of the Union, and derogatory to our professional standing, that journalists collectively should be identified with the interests of any particular newspaper, and with the opinions and policy which it maintains on subjects of public controversy. In view of the fact that the T.U.C., has decided that trade unionists affiliated to it shall be levied for the financial support of such a publication, this Union hereby decides to withdraw from membership of the Congress." J. W. T. Ley (South Wales) said that the extra twopence was earmarked by the T.U.C. for propaganda work, but that was mere chicanery, for the primary propaganda to which the money was to go was the *Daily Herald*. If the Union paid this money it would be to support political principles with which, he suggested, 60 per cent. of their members did not agree.

An executive amendment to take a ballot, in view of the altered conditions of membership of the T.U.C., was carried. A further amendment by Central London that the affiliation be continued, was defeated on a card vote by 2,285 to 1,177. The delegates then decided on a show of hands, amid cheers, by 62 votes to 29, to recommend members in the ballot to vote for continued affiliation. Meakin argued that the Union was not committed to all T.U.C. propaganda, but joined the T.U.C. to be in association with the general trades union movement, and the real issue was whether this outweighed the objections some members

felt to the political activity of the T.U.C. in conjunction with the Labour Party. It was important that brain workers and manual workers should be linked up in the trade union movement. Without such an alliance a social revolution might prove very disastrous to the brain workers. J. Haslam bluntly declared that if the Union desired affiliation it must accept whatever responsibility came along with it. The A.D.M. recommendation was disregarded in the ballot that followed. By 943 votes to 802 the Union decided to withdraw from the T.U.C. This was a notably small vote. The Southport A.D.M., 1924, decided to ballot again, re-affiliation not to be carried through unless supported by three-fifths of those voting. It also directed the appointment of a committee " to investigate the whole question of affiliation to the T.U.C. and to issue a report to all members with the ballot papers, this investigation to be directed to the question of the effect of the affiliation on the strength and progress of the N.U.J. as a trade union." The combined motions were carried by 88 votes to 14.

The 1924 ballot secured a bigger vote and a clear decision which commanded more respect. The votes for affiliation numbered 1,094 and those against 1,180—majority 86. There was no need for any fractional calculation, but H. M. R. repeated the mistake noted before, by a reference in his notes to " a two-thirds majority." The voting in the largest branches was as follows :—Glasgow, 53 for, 47 against ; Leeds, 21 and 49 ; Liverpool, 31 and 26 ; London Central, 231 and 211 ; Manchester, 44 and 40 ; Parliamentary, 21 and 51 ; South Wales, 40 and 70. At Birmingham, 1925, a re-affiliation motion was defeated, and at Edinburgh in 1926 a similar proposal was withdrawn. Frank admission was made of a loss of members, which at the time was discounted. During a very critical two or three years, said Meakin, the effective membership declined by no fewer than 600 members. They had since settled down to the constructive task of building up the strength of the Union and had recaptured, and exceeded, the lost membership. Was it wise to re-open the question and run the risk of renewing the downward movement ? Richardson appeared as the opportunist, saying that it would be bad to risk a clear defeat of affiliation, but if the proposers (Trade and Periodical Branch) knew that it would be carried the Executive would welcome a decision of that sort. Evidently the Branch was dubious, for the motion was withdrawn, but not before W. Betts, of the N.E.C., a stalwart trade unionist, declared that

whether he was disloyal to the Executive or not he was ready to vote for affiliation to the T.U.C.

At the time of the General Strike in 1926 the Union was not bound to the T.U.C., and the question was allowed to rest until 1929. Then, at the Cheltenham A.D.M., affiliation forces were again marshalled. The Trade and Periodical Branch proposed that a ballot be taken on re-affiliation, only to meet defeat on a card vote by 2,525 votes to 1,501. The same branch fared better in the more robust atmosphere of Manchester at Easter, 1930, when the N.E.C. was commissioned to consider the case for and against affiliation, and report for discussion at the next A.D.M. The conference met at Leamington in 1931 and again the Trade and Periodical Branch moved, in the person of Mrs. R. Townsend, for a ballot. The N.E.C., in a report to branches, were dubious about the forcing the issue unless there was evidence of a predominant opinion in favour. Hence they favoured a ballot. This course was approved by 2,662 votes against 2,280. The Union was not yet persuaded of the wisdom of re-affiliation, the ballot recording 1,224 votes for and 1,663 against. In 1934 the same process was repeated. The A.D.M. by a card vote (2,287 votes to 1,539) decided to have a ballot; this appeal had a disappointing response in the total vote, and affiliation was defeated by 1,194 votes to 987.

Two points of view in the A.D.M. debate are worth noting. D. M. Elliott (President in 1942) gave some inside information about the hesitating policy of the Executive. On the question of a ballot 14 voted in favour and seven against, but on the question of issuing a recommendation to members how to vote 11 voted for and 10 against. A. Kenyon (now President of the Union) said that affiliation to a large number of members was a political question, as the T.U.C. had an organic relation with the Labour Party. A political alliance would be offensive. Still undeterred by rebuffs the affiliationists moved again in 1935 for a ballot, and there was a remarkably close finish, the card vote showing 2,215 in favour and 2,217 against. The year following at Carlisle they had the reward of their persistence, a motion in favour of rejoining the T.U.C. being carried by 2,850 votes against 1,977. Six months was allowed as an interval before the ballot to give the Executive time for a campaign, and Teeside wanted them " to devise ways and means of ensuring that all members vote." The General Secretary agreed, if the addendum were prefaced by " attempt to," and this was carried. Another resolution asked

the N.E.C. to bring to the notice of members both the advantages and disadvantages of affiliation. Another instruction was to state on the ballot paper the figures of the Executive vote on the issue and also the figures of the A.D.M. card vote. The ballot figures came in December : for affiliation 1,425, against 1,600. A note was added that the total vote was not so good as had been expected in view of the efforts made to get members to vote. The A.D.M. had given the Executive an impossible task. An attempt was made at the Torquay A.D.M., 1937, to put the brake on the balloting propensity. Shropshire proposing that no branch should be permitted to propose or second a motion in favour of a ballot on T.U.C. affiliation without first proving to the N.E.C. that it was authorised to do so by a clear majority of its members. This was defeated.

After a year's respite the contest was renewed at the Bristol A.D.M., 1939, when it was decided to take a ballot and to recommend members to vote in support of affiliation. A proposal " that the case for and against be circularised " was also carried, though H. D. Nichols expressed the feeling of many in his remark that both sides had already been heard *ad nauseam.* The mover of the main motion was C. J. Bundock (the new General Secretary), who pointed out that other professional associations were now in the T.U.C., and that the Government was constantly dealing with the Congress as the representative body of organised labour. Nichols contended that " the trade union movement was so linked up with the nation's life to-day that no Government could ignore it, and if the N.U.J. was not linked up with the T.U.C. it might as well not be a trade union at all." D. M. Elliot replied that the Union had two distinct schools of thought, and that of the N.E.C. was not that of the membership in the country. In the past affiliation had cost the Union 600 members and it was amazing to hear that they must go to the T.U.C., because the T.U.C. was in league with Downing Street, when at that time the T.U.C. was split with controversy in its own ranks. The N.U.J. dare not risk a split in its ranks. Schaffer (Central London) discounted the opposition on the political issue by recalling that a political levy was only paid by those who decided to do so, and that by affiliating to the T.U.C. the N.U.J. did not in any way affiliate to the Labour Party. The ballot was taken in July and two questions were voted on at the same time—one a proposal to increase the monthly contribution by 2/6, and the other affiliation to the T.U.C. Rules were now in force requiring that any

variation of contribution, and any affiliation or disaffiliation proposal, must be submitted to ballot, and receive a three-fifths majority of those voting. The majority stipulation produced an exciting finish. Both proposals had a substantial majority, but in neither case was it quite enough. In each there were 3,426 voters, and therefore the necessary vote in favour was 2,056. The contribution ballot fell short by 74 votes, and the T.U.C. total by only six! The figures were :—T.U.C. affiliation : 2,050 for, 1,376 against, majority for, 674. Increased contribution, 1,982 for, 1,444 against, majority for, 538.

The N.E.C. expressed its gratification at the votes and its disappointment at its inability to give effect to the will of the majorities. The voting " clearly showed the developing will of the members still further to strengthen their organisation." In an article headed " Defeated despite majority," Bundock pointed out that the membership of the Union was 7,400, and the total vote was 46·3 per cent. of it. Reviewing the various ballots taken he reflected that no matter how important the issue, the Union could not get more than about 50 per cent. of the members to vote on it. The Executive decided to carry on a campaign for the principle of the two defeated proposals. At the Leicester A.D.M., 1940, the Trade and Periodical Branch won the reward of their pertinacity by carrying their motion to take a ballot which was to settle the long-fought battle. On June 1 the N.E.C. announced the result of the ballot as follows : Votes for affiliation to the T.U.C. 1,949, against 865, majority for 1,084. As the three-fifths majority was 1,689 the vote in favour was well in excess, and the ballot was decisive. The Union's application for affiliation was granted by the T.U.C., and the note of triumph in the subsequent report of the General Secretary was legitimate. He wrote :

WE RETURN TO THE FOLD.—After seventeen years we have found our way back to the trade union movement. Our President (E. E. Hunter) and I were proud to represent the Union as it resumed its proper place in this great Congress of workers by hand and brain. In the Cambridge Hall, Southport, on October 7, bank officers, miners, insurance officials, railwaymen, doctors, transport workers, cinema and theatrical employees, engineers, clerks, cotton operatives, journalists, printers, and workers in all sorts of trades, assembled to consider together questions and policies common to them all. It is a wonderful movement, this T.U.C., this association of men and women of widely differing activity pooling their experience and their ideas in a common effort towards communal welfare. It is a tremendous vindication of democracy. Could such free exchanges, such frank criticism, exist even in the easier days of peace under the rule of the dictatorships? Of course not. They (the dictators) are fond of saying that the democracies are worn out, decadent, crumbling systems. They themselves dare not permit men freely to express their thoughts in peace

as we do in war. It would have been a most depressing experience for Hitler and Mussolini had they been in the Cambridge Hall to note the spirit of that gathering of free men and women. The dominant note was "carry on," and the delegates separated after three days (normally they meet for a week) to go back to their several tasks to show Herr H. and Signor M. exactly how decadent is our worn-out democracy!

Thus, during the World War one of the most formidable conflicts within the Union was brought to the definitive stage. If we include the 1922 ballot on the *Daily Herald* levy, there had been no fewer than nine ballots before organised journalists decided to leave the wilderness and settle in the Promised Land of full association with national trade unionism. The ardent apostles of the migration believe that it will prove to be a land flowing with milk and honey and every sincere well-wisher of the Union hopes that it may. In the summer of 1941 Scottish members balloted on affiliation to the Scottish T.U.C., with an inconclusive result. There was a majority in favour of only four votes, but a three-fifths majority was necessary under the rules. In three branches no votes were cast.

An important link forged by the Union, the affiliation to the International Federation of Journalists, is evidence of breadth of outlook. Other proofs were the formation of branches of the Union abroad, one at far away Calcutta, and friendly ties with the organised journalists of the Dominions, and the American Guild. The International was formed in 1926 and held its first Congress in Geneva, with the official recognition of the League of Nations. The Federation was composed of "Associations and Unions whose members are exclusively journalists attached to editorial staffs and agencies, and making journalism their principal occupation, having themselves come into existence to defend professional rights and interests and to improve the conditions of journalism." The aim was defined as the development of the activities of the constituent bodies on an international scale; and its "especial business" to safeguard the freedom of journalism and secure guarantees by law; "to constitute with that object a moral personality capable of authoritative and effective intervention on any occasion when a serious attack is made upon the rights, the liberties, or the persons of journalists by a government, an organisation, or by private individuals"; to introduce model collective or individual contracts of service; and generally to safeguard and promote professional interests and customs. The countries taking part in the first Congress were:—Great Britain (N.U.J. 4,800 members); Germany, 4,300; France, 1,200; Austria, 1,000; Poland, 520; Finland, 300; Norway, 300;

Portugal, 300; Rumania, 300; Greece, 200; Jugo-Slavia, 300. Spain and Bulgaria soon joined and the Germans showed keen interest. The Executive got promptly to work on practical questions. H. M. Richardson became the President of Propaganda and soon the point was raised that Great Britain with the biggest membership, should not allow Germany to take the lead. The meetings of the Executive were held in turn in various Continental capitals and cities.

The German welcome at Cologne in 1928 was especially cordial, there being much civic hospitality and messages of welcome from Ministers of State. Before long Richardson sought sanction for his doctrine that the greatest safeguard of journalists was to be found in alliance between all the workers in the newspaper industry, but this had a cautious reception. Combines were to be studied with a view to formulation of policy; schools of journalism were approved on condition that they are under the direction of professional organisations. With true discernment Richardson very early laid stress on the value of the Federation as a factor in the preservation of peace, in pursuit of which it must counteract the plots of the warmongers and insist "that international news shall be true and complete, neither false nor faked." I have received a short memorandum on the work of the Federation from Archibald Kenyon, who became the President at the Bordeaux Congress in 1939. He writes:

My first contact with the I.F.J. was at the Berlin Conference in 1930, when H. M. Richardson was elected President. F. P. Dickinson and I accompanied him as delegates. The founder was the late Georges Bourdon, a journalist of the Left who by a not unknown conjunction of circumstances was engaged for the greater part of his career on a journal of the Right. He was news editor of the *Figaro* and a brilliant speaker and organiser, passionately devoted to every cause of freedom. Sometimes we used to think he used rather high sounding language about the freedom of the Press, incorruptibility, etc., but, as we see now, that was because we took these things too much for granted and did not sense the dangers which later developed. Bourdon was President of the French Syndicate. National unions and associations were "federated" members of the I.F.J. and associations of foreign correspondents, and national minority unions (such as the German Press Union of Czechoslovakia before the Hitler oppression) were "adherent" members. Its first and main object was the protection by all means, of the liberty of the Press and of journalism. Others were: assemblage and publication of documents, statistical and other, likely to help the defence of the profession; the study of contracts of employment individual and collective, and the general surveillance of their application; study of "benevolent" work and methods; the regulation of professional questions in which the absence of jurisprudence or of established customs might be prejudicial to journalists; the extension to journalists of all countries of the rights and advantages secured by a national association.

The President of the Congress at Berlin was the distinguished German journalist Georg Bernhard, editor of the *Vossische Zeitung*. Bernhard is often mentioned in Lord d'Abernon's "Diary of an Ambassador" for

his persuasive support (with Stresemann) of the Locarno Treaty. Possibly Bernhard's connection with that instrument had something to do with Hitler's dislike of it. He was a Jew, therefore evil, therefore later an *emigré* from the Hitler Reich. He settled in Paris and ran an *emigré* paper there. Another interesting figure at the Berlin Congress was Miliukov, the Russian Liberal leader. He was already an *emigré* running a Russian paper in Paris. Another delegate I remember, not for what he did then, for he contributed nothing to any debate on any subject, but for what he has since become as a Dutch toady of Nazism. I refer to Max Bloxjil, who some months ago was appointed by the Nazis as editor of the Dutch paper *De Standaard*, to take the place of Dr. Colijn, former Prime Minister of Holland. Bloxjil at the time of the Berlin Congress was Berlin correspondent of the *Amsterdam Handelsblad*, whose Paris correspondent, Dr. Voorbeytel, is treasurer of the I.F.J., an office in which he succeeded George Raper, of the Paris *Daily Mail*. Bloxjil at Berlin under the Nazi regime became so blatantly pro-Nazi that his Dutch employers got rid of him.

The chief work of the Berlin Congress, in which Richardson took a constructive part, was to put the finishing touches to the Court of Honour, which among other things was intended to check international mischief-making by journalists. It was to judge complaints against journalists in the international field. Its establishment involved the introduction of means of internal discipline in the national unions over offenders against the principles of honesty and responsibility. The N.U.J. "implemented" this at the Harrogate A.D.M. (1932) by passing a new rule as follows: "Any member who shall have been declared by the International Tribunal of Honour to be unfit to be a journalist shall, failing a successful appeal to the Executive of the I.F.J. by the Union, forthwith cease to be a member of the Union and he shall have no right of appeal to the A.D.M." I made it clear at that A.D.M. that the Tribunal would not take action on a journalist's opinions, but only on actual news and facts and reports concerning international affairs, and the methods adopted in obtaining and publishing them. The president of the Tribunal was Mr. Loder, ex-president of the International Court of Justice at the Hague. Journalists, I contended, should be prepared to make some little sacrifice of national pride and prejudice in the cause of international peace. The object was to stop the dangerous falsification of international news.

The Court was inaugurated at the Hague; it has never functioned. Perhaps like Locarno and the League of Nations, it was born prematurely, but surely the effort of parentage was praiseworthy and can be counted as part of the proverbial good which is never lost. The N.U.J. at least showed itself a pioneer in sacrifice of national sovereignty by adopting the above-mentioned rule; and many will think that the gesture will have to be copied and made effective by nations if the rule of law is to become a sure shield of peace.

H. G. Wells, who had been a member of the N.U.J. for ten years, in 1930 sent his warmest congratulations to H. M. Richardson on the honour done him in his election to the Presidency of the I.F.J. "We journalistic writers," he said, "can do immeasurable service to mankind by pitting the full weight of our influence against those delusions of nationalism that are not simply threatening the world with open war, but also strangling day by day the economic life of our species, through outrageous tariffs and the new strategy of banking patriotism. The world is one in its prosperity and in its needs. It is for the journalist to keep that truth alive." The inauguration of the International Tribunal of Honour for Journalists at the Palace

of Peace, the Hague, in 1931, was a great event, attended by journalists from 22 countries, affiliated to the I.F.J. Richardson, speaking as president, declared their intention to drive out of journalism men who would create ill-will between peoples, by stating as truth mischievous things which they knew to be false. They proposed to bring into public odium those journalists who were false to the ideals of their profession, which was the accurate recording of events, and reasoned comment upon authentic facts. The close of Richardson's term of office was marked by the holding of the biennial conference of the I.F.J. in London in 1932. The variety of subjects dealt with then showed the value of Federation activities.

The shadow of the Hitler menace fell on the Executive of the Federation when it met at Budapest in June, 1933. A resolution was passed lamenting the threat to the freedom of the Press in several countries " by the abuse of national policy," and urging all affiliated bodies to fight against it. Regret was expressed that the Reichsverband had decided to exclude Jews and Marxists from membership, thus transforming this German union into a political organisation, contrary to the statutes of the I.F.J. Efforts were called for to obtain the release of compatriots arrested in Germany for reasons of race or opinion. By 1934 the Reichsverband was lost to the I.F.J., but the numerical loss was more than compensated for by the affiliation of the American Newspaper Guild, a new trade union with 8,000 members. Georg Bernhard was then an exile from his own country, and the question of the constitution of refugee associations in foreign countries had to be tackled. The Congress at Berne in 1936 solemnly affirmed its fidelity to the principle of Article II, *i.e.*, to safeguard by all means the freedom of the press and of journalists. The greatest cheer of the Congress was roused by the declaration of E. J. T. Didymus, a delegate of the N.U.J., that his Union would never be a party to any tinkering with the rule of the Federation which excluded dictator-minded countries from membership.

The fundamental statute above noted was threatened in 1937-8, as the situation in Europe deteriorated. The Swiss organisation pressed for a change in the statute in order to make possible the entry into the Federation of countries where both the condition and the ideal of a free Press had been suppressed. This attitude was traceable to the Swiss conception of neutrality, and to the fact that she had totalitarian neighbours. A special report on the position was prepared by the President (Dr. Eskelund) and Vice-

President (A. Kenyon) of the I.F.J., and at the Brighton A.D.M., 1938, it was resolved to insist on adherence to Article II and in the event of any modification of the Article to take a ballot of the Union and recommend disaffiliation. Kenyon quoted Hitler's statement that the new rules in Germany were far better than the liberty of newspapers to tell lies, and Goebbels's boast that the Press was a piano for him to play on. The firm attitude of the N.U.J. was effective in holding some of the weaker units of the I.F.J. to the fundamental principle. The Executive of the I.F.J. decided that nothing had arisen to call for any modification of the statutory position. Switzerland alone of the federated unions decided to withdraw. After the adoption of the N.U.J. Code of Conduct the I.F.J. followed suit with an international Code of Professional Honour. The Blue Card issued by the Federation proved its value as a passport for journalists on foreign assignments; it was recognised by governments and authorities of various kinds, and secured many privileges for the holders.

The war has put an end for the time being to all the activities of the I.F.J., but in the earlier period through Stephen Valot, the General Secretary, and Mme. Péladan, his assistant, an immense amount of work was done to help, morally and materially, refugee journalists from several countries, notably Germany, Russia and Spain. At the last Congress, at Bordeaux in 1939, on the proposal of the N.U.J. delegation, a special fund was created, by a levy amounting to ten per cent. of the affiliation fees, to aid members in distress outside their own countries. A courageous New Year message was sent to all affiliated organisations at the opening of 1940, by Kenyon and Valot, calling for the keeping of the bond which had so long united them, and the community of ideals. Homage was paid to members who had fallen victims of the inhuman catastrophe, and to those who had suffered and fought, whether on the battlefield or in the midst of the horrors of invasion. Faithful to solidarity and tradition journalists had everywhere welcomed exiled colleagues, who had found active help on all frontiers whither their journey led them—in Lithuania, Hungary, Rumania, Belgium and elsewhere.

Happily a new body is now in existence to carry on as far as possible during the ravages of war the work of the I.F.J. Its official title is the Federation Internationale des Journalistes des Pays Allies ou Libres—"Fijpal" for short. It regards itself as holding in trust the spirit and work of the I.F.J. Its fundamental principle is to safeguard and support the freedom of the Press;

its activities will be guided by this and by the resolve to see the I.F.J. re-established on a stronger, universal basis after the war. Meantime, in the war period, the objects are:

(1) To study the organisation and role of the Press and to prepare data likely to assist in making the Press a better instrument for social progress, both national and international, after the war; (2) To provide means for the pooling and exchange of information among affiliated bodies on trade union and professional questions; (3) To promote social and cultural facilities among affiliated journalists; (4) To establish contact with and provide comforts for affiliated members serving in the Allied armed forces; (5) To advise on matters connected with, and to organise aid for, expatriated journalists; (6) To aid by all means in its power the victory of the forces of freedom and democracy.

As was fitting London, the sanctuary of the oppressed, saw the start of the Federation in December, 1941, and the N.U.J. was largely responsible for its inauguration, giving the necessary financial aid. The first president is Archibald Kenyon and the secretary is L. A. Berry, National Organiser of the N.U.J., whose preliminary work was one of the main factors in the success of the movement. One of the most interesting speakers at the inaugural conference, at which Tom Foster (president of the N.U.J.) took the chair and gave an inspiring message, was Alexander Sverlov, of the Union of Press Workers of the U.S.S.R. There were now, he said, in the Soviet Union, 35,000 professional journalists, of whom 29,000 worked on the 9,000 newspapers, and ordinary citizens to the number of over 3,000,000 wrote for the papers. Thousands of Soviet journalists were at the front fighting as members of the Red Army and writing stories for their papers in their free time. The assembly, in which ten countries were represented, was touched by a tribute paid by the President in these words:

We think to-day of our colleagues in the oppressed countries, who are producing underground newspapers, with affection and admiration as unknown heroes of our profession. Some day I hope we shall know them and learn the full story of the work they are doing. Meanwhile, I hope they may learn in some way how thrilled we are by their unconquerable courage, their inexhaustible resourcefulness, their scorn of danger and defiance of the invader. Somehow these newspapers are written, produced, distributed and read, despite every hindrance. Those who do this are making for themselves a glorious chapter in the struggle for human liberty. We salute them with pride and gratitude for their achievements and example.

All the speeches were recorded by the B.B.C. for broadcast in the news bulletins of the respective countries.

The N.U.J., in view of its position of authority in the International, has rightfully as its chief representative thereon a man of the personality and gifts of Archibald Kenyon. Richardson enjoyed a high degree of popularity in the Federation, and in

Kenyon he has a worthy successor. After winning his spurs as a reporter he is now assistant editor and chief leader writer of the *Yorkshire Evening Post*. A man of ripe experience and sound judgment he is valued in counsel, and in the social circle he is equally esteemed, for he is a capital story teller, a good chess player, and an excellent vocalist. There is one other accomplishment that has been of real value at international meetings, and that is a speaking acquaintance with the French and German languages, which he modestly admits has often proved useful to his English fellow delegates. He has a reading knowledge of three other foreign languages and Esperanto. A fraternal delegate at the 1938 A.D.M., Dr. M. C. M. Voorbeytel, treasurer of the I.F.J., described Kenyon as being "always friendly and moderate in his interventions, with that touch of humour which foreigners appreciated so much in the true British nature—he had been of the greatest service to their work and deliberations." These qualities, recognised by a foreigner, are well known to the N.U.J., which is fortunate in having such a leader as its own President this year.

The second annual conference of the I.F.J., was held in London on October 31, 1942. The officers were:—President, A. Kenyon (Gt. Britain); vice-presidents, G. Gombault (Fighting France) and A. Sverlov (U.S.S.R.); hon. treasurer, K. Smogorzewski (Poland); hon. secretary, L. A. Berry (Gt. Britain). Delegates in attendance represented Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Fighting France, Poland, U.S.S.R., and Yugoslavia. Congratulations and good wishes were sent by Ministers of the chief United Nations. Resolutions were passed:

(1) Declaring that upon the free Press of the world lies the vital task of expressing and rallying the will of the peoples to action to defeat the Axis powers and to build a free world, which can best be done by full and truthful reporting of all war news within the limits of legitimate censorship, by the criticism of defects in the war effort, and by keeping the ideals of social justice and democracy before the United Nations as the goal; (2) Saluting journalists in occupied countries who have maintained fidelity to the struggle for liberation, stigmatising traitor journalists who have deliberately served the Axis cause, and declaring that their crimes must be judicially dealt with; (3) Declaring that the freedom of the Press must be guaranteed, with the obligation not to publish false or distorted news to which end the universal adoption of a Code of Professional Conduct was urged.

The Congress thanked the N.U.J. for its help and the hon. secretary for his work and issued an appeal to the journalists of all allied and neutral countries to join the Federation, claiming that no journalist could be neutral to the charter it proclaimed.

For several years now the Union has been affiliated to the National Federation of Professional Workers, a body which was founded in 1920 and immediately got to work on practical lines which commended themselves to trade unions generally. It is curious to recall that in 1919 Sidney Dark, writing as a young member of the N.U.J. suggested an attempt by the Union to create "a middle-class T.U.C." His idea was a combination of teachers, engineers, bank clerks, journalists, actors, music hall artists, and doctors, all of whom had their trade unions, which should be supplementary, and not antagonistic, to the T.U.C. In reality the F.P.W. fulfils this aim. It has kept in touch with the General Council of the T.U.C. on industrial matters and had official connection with the International Labour Office. Among the many subjects on which its work has been concentrated may be mentioned the promotion of bills dealing with sanitary conditions in bad offices, and the provision of compensation for workers displaced by amalgamations (which has a special relation to journalism). The Union's report for 1941 speaks of another year of valuable activity on behalf of non-manual workers by the Federation, which could properly claim to have done much to create the public opinion which had resulted in the extension of the salary limit in National Health and Pensions Insurance to £420 a year. An excellent example of the Federation's work was the close attention given to questions raised by the Government's review of the social services. A valuable "benefit" is given to affiliated and certain kindred bodies by the Federation in its consultant, dental, optical and health services at specially reduced fees, and available in towns all over the kingdom.

As an illustration of the interlocking of technical and industrial combinations which increases with the perfecting of organisation, it is interesting to note that the Federation includes three definitely newspaper unions (namely, the Association of the Correctors of the Press, the N.U.J., and the National Union of Press Telegraphists), and two of the big mechanical unions in the printing industry which have technical and clerical sections (namely, the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants, and the National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers). These again come into the P. & K.T.F. alliance, and find another bond in the T.U.C. Emphasis was laid in 1932 on the status of the N.U.J. as the only appropriate trade union for working journalists. The P. & K.T.F. declared: "We have no

knowledge of any other representative organisation for working journalists which is based on trade unionism; this Federation does not accept more than one union as representing a specific class of working members." The F.P.W. wrote: " So far as our information goes the N.U.J. is clearly, and from every point of view, the only proper trade union for working journalists." This was an effective reply to the trade union claim of the Institute of Journalists.

One other affiliation remains to be mentioned—that to the National Council for Civil Liberties. The Council is a non-party organisation that aims at the co-ordination of the activities of political parties and other bodies, and the concentration into a single channel of the efforts of various societies concerned in their own way with the preservation of civil rights. Its work is necessarily political and not trade unionist. It commands the support of many well-known people, but its organisation is loosely-knit, unlike that of the trade union combinations to which the N.U.J. belongs. In one instance in particular the council did good work for journalists. It helped to fight the menace implicit in the Official Secrets Acts of 1911 and 1920.

As time went on the N.C.C.L. came under criticism from those who regarded it as a medium of Communist exploitation. No one asserted that the Council consciously participated in any such process, but the complaint in many Union circles was that the active and tireless Communist minority used the conferences, promoted with the best of motives by the Council, for their own purposes of propaganda and " infiltration." Everybody admitted that the Council was in many ways doing good work, but it was held to suffer from the absence of a democratic basis in its own organisation. As it had no closely-knit constituency of its own it was necessary to gain support from friends in all approachable camps, and in casual ways. That perhaps is a defect in most *ad hoc* bodies. Within the Union itself Communist influence became increasingly felt, and the demand for the removal of the ban on the *Daily Worker* (the Communist organ suppressed under Defence Regulations) added fuel to the fires of a considerable controversy. In August, 1941, the Birmingham branch of the N.U.J. protested against " the pronounced leanings of the Council to the Peace Pledge Union and other subversive activities." It was alleged that Communist influence was diverting the Council from its original purpose of defending the threatened liberties of the people. Doubtless the Council could reply

effectively to all this ; my purpose is, not to deal with the merits of the issue, but to show how Union opinion shaped itself in relation to the Council. The Union Executive at last decided to submit a motion to the A.D.M. (Leeds, 1942) " that a ballot be taken on the question of the disaffiliation of the N.U.J. from the N.C.C.L., and that members be recommended to vote in favour of disaffiliation." Before the A.D.M. arrived, however, the Executive decided to withdraw the motion. Thus the affiliation stands, and the N.C.C.L. is upholding the standard of a free-as-possible Press in war time. A recent object of its vigilance was a subterranean move for telescoping newspapers as an emergency measure.

CHAPTER XV.

RELATIONS WITH INSTITUTE: FAILURE OF FUSION PARLEYS.

THERE is a striking coincidence in the origins of the Institute of Journalists and of the National Union of Journalists. In the year 1884 a few pressmen in Manchester met to consider the formation of a " compact body for social and professional purposes," and in October of that year the National Association of Journalists was formed at Birmingham. Six years later a Royal Charter was obtained and the Association became the incorporated Institute of Journalists. The same geographical order marked the start of the National Union 22 years later. Manchester became the centre of the widespread stirrings of revolt which demanded the creation of the Union, and Birmingham was the scene of the consummation. But in this accident of birth place the parallel ends, for in conception and operation the two movements diverged. Clear evidence of this was seen in the action of many of the Union pioneers. They joined the older body in the hope of finding an effective instrument of reform, but as the years passed and nothing fundamental was done, they resolved to abandon the combination of professional idealism and economic futility. One vital difference between the two organisations, of course, was that the Institute admitted newspaper proprietors and managers to its membership, whereas the Union was strictly confined to working journalists, in the sense of salary earners, to the specific exclusion of " proprietors, managers, or directors."

This cleavage became at once manifest in the declared objects. The Union's object No. 1 was "to defend and promote the professional interests of its members with regard to salary, conditions of employment, tenure of office." Not one of these basic things found mention in the "objects and purposes" of the Institute as stated in the Charter. The first of these was an examination or other test for membership, and following came the elevation of status and improvement of qualifications; ascertainment of law and practice and supervision of members at work; collection of useful information; watching legislation and obtaining amendments; employment register; personal and friendly intercourse between members; conferences; formation of libraries; a professional journal; benevolent and benefit funds; acquisition of a hall; obtaining formal and definite professional standing; and lastly, "the promotion by all reasonable means of the interests of journalists and journalism." All very admirable, as far as it went, but it permitted the neglect of the things that really mattered to the great body of underpaid and overworked journalists, and that omission made the advent of the Union inevitable. From the outset the N.U.J. was absolutely candid. "The Society is a trade union" was the first sentence in its rules, and its primary object I have already quoted. The line of demarcation between the two bodies, thus visible in documentary form, also revealed itself distinctly in the utterances of the first leaders. About those of Union leaders there was no trimming or indistinctness.

What of the others? I have a copy of the first handbook issued by the Institute in March, 1890, in which my own name makes its appearance as a pupil associate, on the staff of the *Chatham and Rochester News*. In the same list is William Newman Watts, of the *Evening Guardian*, Bolton. The foreword, written by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Hugh Gilzean Reid, the first President of the Institute, expressed lofty and unexceptionable aims—status, a code of professional honour, an educational standard, public service—but had no mention of the wages and comforts of which these labourers should be worthy. A defence of the Institute from what was evidently a large amount of criticism came from Mr. Henry Lashmore, F.J.I., deputy chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council, in 1902. He dealt with "the aims, work and limitations" of the Institute: "Salaries had not gone up by leaps and bounds; the charter had no savour of a trade union policy, and he thought it a happy case that such an element

was wanting. He had no sympathy with the cry which would exclude the proprietorial element." In subsequent years, when the Union was growing fast in membership and influence, the Institute wavered and went to some trouble to establish its claim to be a trade union. Yet every now and then Mr. Frederick Peaker (President of the Institute 1923-1925) chimed in with a favourite phrase of his, that they would have nothing to do with "crude trade unionism." My purpose here is to give some account of the relations between the two organisations. Though an old member of the Institute turned critic, I shall strive to be quite fair and true to fact. Like the Mikado:

> My object all sublime
> I shall achieve in time—
> To let the punishment fit the crime.

The story is best told in time sequence, so I will begin at the beginning. That was a quarrel and it set the key for much that has happened in the past thirty-six years. For most of that period the relation has been one of armed neutrality broken at times by the outbreak of open hostility, but with some notable interludes of peace and goodwill in which serious efforts were made in the direction of amalgamation. The original quarrel was the main feature of the first issue of the *National Union Journal*, in November, 1908. At the Institute Conference in the preceding September Mr. A. Walter, of London, the hon. secretary of the Institute, in a discussion on the provision of out-of-work and sickness benefit, said: "It is true that the National Union of Journalists has dangled these (out-of-work) benefits before working journalists, but experts who have studied their scheme have declared it to be actuarially unsound." Immediately Watts asked Mr. Walter for the names of the experts and a copy of their report; and failing this he called for a withdrawal. The letter noted that Mr. Walter realised the seriousness of the charge, as he sought shelter by adding that he did not commit himself to it. The reply from Mr. Walter was that he "spoke from common report," and his statement reflected opinions which he had heard so frequently that he regarded them as generally entertained amongst experienced journalists who had given some thought to the subject, and who had discussed the question of benefit for journalists with the assistance of actuaries and insurance experts.

Watts in his answer treated the communication as "equivalent to an admission that you had not a shred of evidence for your statement; yet you do not express regret for having made it.

This is an omission which I cannot understand." He pointed out that Mr. Walter must at the time have had in his possession a memorandum on sickness and unemployment benefits, contained in the Institute "Proceedings," the data in which showed that the Union's benefit scheme was sound and had a large margin of security. He added that he would be glad to have a withdrawal and in any case intended to publish the correspondence. Mr. Walter wrote :" In view of your statement that you intend to publish the correspondence which has passed between us I have nothing to add to what I have previously written." The Union President (Lethem) dissected the Institute memorandum on benefits, and demonstrated the soundness of the Union's financial position. The first article in the *Journal* by the editor (H. M. Richardson) explained the intention that the organ now started "shall be an arsenal from which may be drawn weapons to defend the Union from the attacks made upon it by its opponents." The first opponent cited was the Institute, and it was fairly claimed that Mr. Walter's allegation had been disproved. Referring to radius and other agreements "that had long been a scandal among victims who have been impotent to get redress from the law," Richardson made a strong counter attack in the statement "that these agreements in several cases have been enforced by members of the Institute of Journalists." Here was an early glimpse of a controversy that was fated to occupy his potent pen more than any others.

Just after the Manchester A.D.M. in 1910 Sir H. Gilzean Reid, in a letter to *The Times*, said : "It is difficult to understand why the Institute and the Union, with identical objects rightly interpreted, cannot affiliate in some form or other, or better still amalgamate, thus concentrating all their forces for the full attainment of those desirable objects." Speaking at Sheffield Lethem declared that the reason why amalgamation could not take place was that, while the Union had adopted the trade union principle of combination for the protection of the rights of working journalists, the Institute rejected that principle, and admitted employers as well as employees. He agreed that perhaps on paper the objects of both bodies were the same. That was a generous admission, but Lethem proceeded to point out that in a period of 25 years the Institute had not proved an effective instrument for carrying out the objects, and therefore the Union was formed. He accurately interpreted the spirit of the Union in that day in saying : "The formation of the Union does not

signify distrust of employers, but an attitude which all reasonable, self-respecting, wage-earning men ought to take up, to stand up for their manhood. We are prepared yet to rely upon employers who are honest and just, but we are determined to build up an organisation that will exact justice from employers who are unjust." Apparently the spirit of the Institute leaders indicated by the declaration of its ex-President made some impression on Union opinion. At the 1913 A.D.M. Ernest Williams spoke of a distinct trend of events towards sympathy, and perhaps co-operation, with the Institute; he assumed that no step would be taken in that direction without the full knowledge of the whole Union. The President (J. H. Harley) assured the delegates that at no time had any step of the kind suggested been contemplated, and added that there was no manner of doubt that the Union had triumphed all along the line. The "trend" persisted, and in October, 1916, the Union Executive deemed it necessary to publish an official statement in the *Journal*. Here are some of its points freely summarised:

For several months much prominence has been given in the *Journal* of the Institute to articles and notes on the question of Institute and Union fusion. The sincere desire of the writers to bring about a united organisation is cordially recognised. In stating the Union case frankly we are equally sincere in our desire for a complete organisation of journalists on a basis which is best suited for the calling. So far none of the Institute advocates of fusion appears to admit the case for the elimination of proprietors, managers or manager editors from membership. It must be said firmly and definitely that upon this point there can be no compromise so far as the Union is concerned. What seems to be asked for is the absorption of the larger and better organised body, the Union, into the smaller body, the Institute, the new organisation to be called the United Institute of Journalists. After ten years of strenuous and extraordinarily successful work, which we believe to be due primarily to the form and spirit of the constitution of the Union, and after elaborating a system of organisation and administration which has been copied step by step by the Institute, we are now asked to declare, in effect, that we have been on wrong lines all the time. We are told by Mr. Hodgson that there is really no difference between the two bodies. Why not then accept the constitution of the body with the largest membership, the largest amount of liquid funds, and incontestably the most efficient and effective local organisation throughout the kingdom?

The differences between the two bodies are not trivial. It is not merely a question of proprietors or managers. The Institute, in our view, is saddled with an unwieldy form of government and a traditional spirit which fosters academic discussion and nice weighing up of opposing theories, rather than grappling with facts and securing quick decisions from which action and results follow. The wages movement of the Union justifies this statement. A lengthy discussion recently at an Institute Council meeting showed clearly that the majority of the members, led away by the fallacy that journalism is a profession in the economic sense that law and medicine are, still believe that salaries can be raised by an educational test. Journalism is unique among employments in some ways, but the essential point in this discussion is that it is predominantly a calling in which men and women work for employers for wages (or salaries, if you prefer the word), and in which generally speaking

security of tenure is far from assured. In the professions of law and medicine, the predominant condition is that the majority of the persons engaged in them practise for themselves. Journalists are economically in the same position as wage-earners in industry. The fact that journalists have a special relationship to public affairs has nothing to do with the question of organisation on a trade union basis, and that is what the Institute has failed to understand.

The Union has adapted the machinery of trade union organisation to the special conditions which it found existing in journalism. Why should the fact that the earnings of journalists vary, and are not standardised, prevent activity on ordinary trade union lines (negotiation, arbitration, or even the use of the strike weapon when every other means fails to move some stubbornly unyielding proprietor) in order to improve existing wages ? Why should the fact that it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to standardise hours of labour, prevent trade union activity to secure reasonable working conditions, and a fair amount of leisure time ? . . . The union has shown itself capable of providing effectively for those wider interests which arise out of the special place and function of journalism in public life. Much is made in the Institute articles of the alleged innocuousness of the proprietorial element in the membership of that body. Why then is it thought necessary to establish " grievance committees " which are to be free from that element ? At Union meetings any and every question concerning the conditions of employment is discussed with a frankness and freedom which would be impossible if proprietors, or their representatives, were present. To this may be ascribed chiefly the vitality of the organisation, the definiteness of its decisions, and the resolution with which it has attacked the difficult and complex wages problem. We cordially acknowledge (concluded the Executive) the goodwill of the writers of the Institute articles, but we ask, in all seriousness and friendliness, do they really believe that the Union is in such doubt about its constitution, the basis of its membership, or its future progress on the lines it has mapped out for itself, that fusion proposals in the form in which they have been put forward so far can be seriously considered ?

That statement of 27 years ago seems, on re-reading it, to be frank, fair and reasonable. Just about the time it was written the Institute Executive suggested to the Union joint action on a scheme to facilitate the employment of journalists after the war. Co-operation, of course, was not fusion, and the idea has had some attraction for the " moderates " or the " centre " (or whatever you like to call them) in the Union. Clear thought has been necessary to decide this question on the many occasions on which it has arisen. But the underlying principle of distinction in the constitution of the two bodies has always proved decisive. And so in 1916 Watts was instructed to inform the Institute " that, under the present constitution of the Institute joint action in this matter would hamper the Union in protecting the interests of working journalists." He also pointed out that the Union was already taking steps to meet the situation. At the moment these exchanges were in progress the Union had to pay the price of its consistency. By the promotion of G. H. Lethem to a journalistic position which involved his retirement from full membership, we lost his services as hon. treasurer, and his active co-operation

in a work to which he had rendered invaluable help. Happily for the Union Lethem returned to a rank which permitted his resumption of full Union membership.

A decisive ruling, which has ever since had the sanction of a House of Lords judgment, was given at the 1917 A.D.M. at Manchester. After a full debate the following motion by Liverpool was carried by 1,729 votes to 98, though delegates representing 716 members did not vote:

In the opinion of this A.D.M. co-operation between the N.U.J. and the Institute of Journalists for any purpose is unnecessary and undesirable; we feel that the Union is strong and wise enough to carry out the object of its existence; namely, to look after the interests of its members, without any help from outside, and that for the Union to co-operate with journalistic non-members would be to defeat its aim of making membership of the Union indispensable to every journalist.

The most important amendment was proposed by Foster for Central London. It was to add after the word "purpose" the words "affecting wages and working conditions." His main contention was that there were questions on which co-operation might be useful, particularly in approaches to Government Departments, which objected to deal with a body representing only a section of an industry. They also had to work with employers in some matters, and with the Institute when that body was called in. One or two voices were raised in support of joint action in matters of general interest, but the debate in the main favoured complete independence, and there were evidences of indignation at the tactics of the Institute. One speaker said he knew some appalling stories of the way things were done by the Institute to hamper the work of the Union, since the failure of its effort to kill the Union in its infancy. Meakin pictured Institute writers broaching impossible proposals to throw on the Union the onus of refusing unity and then, when the Executive issued its statement, those people heaped abuse on the heads of Union officials. Bishop (Surrey) said that although a trade union journalist who was in the Institute should leave it, there were many dual memberships.

Ernest Williams, in his presidential address, expressed forcibly the prevailing opinion of the conference: "The possibility of an effective society embracing both employers and employed is now discounted by the establishment not only of this Union, but of federations of newspaper proprietors and managers. There is nothing to gain and everything to lose by fusion with a society attempting to combine—I say 'attempting' advisedly—the interests of both employers and employed. The employers would

not dream of surrendering their separate organisations at the call of the Institute of Journalists. Why, then, should we? The cry is for one society. There is but one society of working journalists. It is the National Union of Journalists." The course was set by this decision of 1917, and though the variable winds of argument constantly blew, there was for years no deviation. The propaganda of the Institute *Journal* ever and anon provoked our wits and philosophers to some retort. Very occasionally the *riposte* was in verse. One such venture, in the metre of " H.M.S. Pinafore," appeared in the *Journalist* of October, 1919, signed " F." The culprit, clearly Tom Foster, sang " when I was a lad I joined a firm, as 'prentice for a reporting term." He satirised the complicated Institute grades of men and salaries, and made play with the undoubted fact that while the Institute was producing schedules, the Union was winning agreements :

For the Institute still registers the rates the papers pay—
It's the pressure gauge; the steam power is the N.U.J.

Central London set down a motion for the 1920 A.D.M. declaring that the time had arrived for all working journalists to be required to be members of the N.U.J., and calling on the Executive to enforce that policy in all spheres of journalism and to hold regular card inspections. In view of possible hardship on men who had qualified for Institute benefits and could not afford to leave it, or pay contributions to both bodies, the branch withdrew the motion. Foster maintained that the existence of the Institute was a hindrance to the Union's work and the Union should appeal to all its members who belonged to the Institute to come out " as soon as they conveniently could." The conference, however, proceeded to accept a motion, on the initiative of Central London and Manchester, asserting the policy of compulsory membership of the Union and authorising the N.E.C. to support Union members in any office who refused to work with non-unionists.

Richardson was a hard-hitter, and in the spring of 1920, following the Munro Arbitration, he was involved in one of those personal clashes which are the symptons of tension. In the *Journalist* he wrote that though he was once a keen and hopeful member of the Institute he now frankly wanted to see the end of it, because it was an obstacle in the way to the betterment of working conditions in journalism. (In the Institute Grey Book, 1897, the roll of pupil associates contains the name of Harry Marriott Richardson, *Staffs Sentinel*, Hanley.) Replying to a statement by the President of

the Institute that they found the presence of proprietors in their ranks helpful in their wages campaign, the Union secretary asserted that of the proprietors who appeared at the Arbitration to resist the Union's claim for a higher minimum, several were members of the Institute. One of their principal witnesses, he stated, who was apparently prepared to give reasons against a four-guinea minimum for weekly paper men, was a member of the Institute Council. Yet the Institute was claiming that all pre-war wages should be doubled and that particular gentleman admitted that he was paying editors £4 to £4 10s. a week. He challenged Mr. George Springfield, the President of the Institute, to explain why that gentleman was allowed to remain a member of the Institute Council. The secretary of the Institute wrote asking for the names of his members who resisted the Union demand, and of the particular member of the council who said he was paying his editors from £4 to £4 10s. a week. Richardson gave several names as resisters and mentioned the name of the "particular member." The Institute *Journal* described his statements as "misleading, inaccurate and unfair." It urged that its proprietor members attended the Arbitration "to consider and discuss any claims submitted," and that they were prepared to support an advance on the then existing minimum.

Richardson stuck to his point that Newspaper Society representatives, including members of the Institute, did go to the Arbitration prepared to resist the Union demand for a £4 minimum, and said that the "particular member" admitted that he was paying £4 10s. to an editor who before the war was getting £3 3s. "It seems that Mr. ——— is not a member of the Institute Council," he wrote. "His brother, Mr. ——— is, and his brother is his business partner, I am informed. Therefore, if Mr. ——— was speaking on behalf of the small paper proprietors, he was, presumably, speaking on behalf of his brother, who is a member of the Institute Council. And his brother, being a partner, is presumably to be held partly responsible for paying £4 10s. to a man instead of the £6 6s. to which he would be entitled were the Institute idea of 100 per cent. increase on pre-war wages put into practice." I give this dispute in some detail because, although the Union was convinced that many of the proprietor members of the Institute paid low wages and evaded agreements, it was very rare, for reasons obvious to journalists, that a name could be cited in public. In fact, I believe this was the only incident of the sort in the long contention between the Union and

the Institute. Richardson was on his mettle and he did not lose the chance of effectively rounding off his case.:

The Institute cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Gentlemen who are both proprietors and members of the Institute should either cease to take part in the Institute's campaign for 100 per cent. increase on pre-war wages, or else stay away from arbitrations when the Union is endeavouring to get such increases. Mr. F. Hadfield Farthing, at the meeting of the Institute Council, said that "if they found after the most scrupulous and impartial investigation that these charges were true, the intention of the Executive was clear and precise. It would immediately ask the Council to take against these members or any of them the disciplinary action for which the Standing Orders provided." Mr. ——— put forward the suggestion that there may have been some confusion with a namesake of his (his brother), and that the Union had jumped to the conclusion that he was the member of the Institute Council of that name. Did the Institute Council then ask Mr. ——— if he was in partnership with his brother; and if so whether he had been paying editors from £4 to £4 10s. 0d. a week? Did they make a careful and impartial inquiry? No. Without any more ado they proceeded to "disciplinary action." They elected Mr. ——— a Fellow of the Institute. That is a delightful Tolstoyan touch which reveals the utter inability of the Institute Council to recognise realities.

Mr. Farthing, mentioned above, was for years chief sub-editor on the *Daily Express*. A keen cricketer, he died suddenly while playing on the Dulwich ground. He and I both lived at Dulwich and frequently on train journeys to and from Fleet Street together we discussed the campaign for the betterment of journalistic conditions. He had much sympathy with Union aims, and sincerely regretted the handicaps under which the Institute suffered in its work. Nevertheless he stuck to his ship.

Some correspondence of earlier date, which happily I did not destroy when I had no thought of writing this history, shows how the Institute "lag" was a brake on the wheels of Union progress. The Institute had the natural instinct of survival, and when the Union was conducting successful wage movements this led it to make competitive interventions at critical moments, which produced irritation among Union leaders immersed in negotiations with proprietors. One such instance is revealed in a letter from Meakin to Martin (then the Union President) in December, 1917. The Union were gaining war bonuses all over the country, and had just won recognition and a scale of bonuses from the Newspaper Federation. Meakin was indignant about the action of the Surrey district of the Institute in thanking the proprietors of that county for a paltry concession. He wrote:

Just a word about the situation created by the Institute action. In my judgment it will only injure us if we fail to take a strong line in order to avoid the danger of wounding the susceptibilities of members who are in the Institute. I have drafted a letter which should go to every member, because it will, I think, effectively explain our action in refusing

to go in jointly with the Institute. By their action in Surrey they have dealt a heavy blow at our movement to get decent concessions, but they have enabled us to show how their policy tells against the working journalist. By passing a resolution of thanks to the Surrey employers for giving a miserable 20 per cent. bonus over 1914 salaries, they have given those employers (many of whom are in the Institute) an argument against any further concessions to us. "Oh," they can say, "the Institute are satisfied with what has been done." When the facts are known I do not think the Institute will quite enjoy the position they are in. Applauding a wretched bonus of 6s. for a 30s. man and 8s. for a 40s. man, as a final settlement, when as a matter of fact most of our members have got nearly as much as this, and have a right to expect an additional 7s. 6d. or 10s. ! There is no need to attack the Institute. All we have got to do is to rub in the meaning and effect of their panic-stricken and ill-considered action. (The Newspaper Federation bonus obtained by the Union was £1 a week on a wage of 30s. and under, and 17s. 6d. over 30s. up to 40s.) In addition we can quote from the Institute's amazing and mischievous letter to London proprietors, in which they ask for details of wages paid, and say in effect that the bad conditions they desire to remedy exist chiefly in the provinces. I don't think we need anything more to keep the loyalty of our members.

The tone of this protest was justified in the opinion of those of us who knew of Meakin's fine self-sacrificing work in the Union wages campaign. The development in London belongs to the chapter on the Union's dealings with the N.P.A., but the student of Institute mentality may well note here a curious confession. When the Union achieved considerable gains by staff and individual applications all over the country the Institute followed with a letter to all proprietors. Then the Union adopted the policy of approaching the proprietors' federations, and again the Institute followed suit. In its *Journal* of November, 1917, the Institute Executive stated unequivocally that it had been encouraged to take this last course by reason of the successful negotiations recently conducted by the N.U.J. in the North of England and in the Midlands. The writer added this naïve comment: "One hopes that the Union will not take this effort unkindly; it is meant to be helpful . . . and to convey an unmistakable hint to the proprietors that on this question, at any rate, the great body of journalists speaks with one voice."

The friendly nature of this note was in harmony with a movement that had for some time been stirring in the Institute in favour of *pourparlers* with the Union. In October, 1916, Watts in a letter to me said: "I suppose you have seen the monthly Institute feeler *re* amalgamation. Gardiner (President of the Institute, 1915-1916) in his innocence has let the cat out of the bag in his reference to proprietors." Leading members of the Institute persistently advocated fusion, and in the Executive statement already quoted the implications were noted. At the same period J. E. Brown wrote: "The Institute people, or rather some of them,

are making desperate efforts to bring about fusion. This must not be treated lightly by us. Already I find it is having some effect in West Surrey, Reading and Oxford, and even Brighton way our people are suggesting that, if they could work in co-operation with the Institute, it might do some good. In view of the Liverpool A.D.M. decision on the Surrey motion we should, I think, warn our people of the danger of listening to the appeals of Gardiner and others. Personally, I have my views on the whole business, but I am going to stick loyally to that decision." The Surrey motion at Liverpool in 1914 favoured co-operation and was decisively defeated. Brown contemplated co-operation then, but plumped for amalgamation.

Watts, however, administered a stern Northern dose to those whom Richardson had spoken of, in a mordant phrase, as "Surrey capons." It would be a monumental piece of folly to approach the Institute, declared Watts, and it was deplorable to find one of the Union branches proposing such a resolution. This undoubtedly described the prevailing Union view, and in such case, those who were ready to give any weight at all to Institute reasonings had to watch their steps. On the whole I myself might perhaps be classified as a "moderate," though one of my friends in Central London once called me a "hot gospeller of trade unionism." As for political alignment, in the days of Gladstone and Chamberlain, I was a Radical, and in the municipal politics of the L.C.C. a keen Progressive. When heat was more manifest than light in Union affairs I was in danger of getting into hot water. Such an occasion came in January, 1917, when there was a suggestion that Mr. J. L. Garvin, then President of the Institute, and myself, then Vice-President of the Union, should meet for some sort of consultation. Carefully, I submitted the idea to Watts, who showed my note to Richardson, Haslam and Meakin in Manchester. "I did not tell them my opinion," wrote Watts, "but they each replied on the lines with which I agree. This is that, acting in your private capacity, there is nothing to prevent you having a conversation with Mr. Garvin, on the clear understanding that the Union is in no way committed. You may discover some useful information. I am sending a copy of this letter to Williams and Martin (President of the Union) asking them to write you direct saying whether they approve or disapprove of it."

Next day came a telegram from Martin: "Garvin interview should be unofficial and strictly confidential. You are on thin

ice. If gets out fatal. Writing." In his letter Martin said a private talk might do the Union a lot of good, in more ways than one, but urged that if it became public it would do me a lot of harm with Union branches. " It would not satisfy them for you to say you made it clear that it was a purely private conversation. They would say ' Yes, but you are a member of the Executive and known to be coming on for the chair and your very position prevents it being what you claim for it.' I am sure we shall have to be prepared for a big onslaught from Williams (the ex-President) if it gets to him. Still, I am sure you see how necessary it is to act most diplomatically in the matter." Of course the experience of a Union leader is a constant schooling in diplomacy. The suggested meeting never took place, and friendly contact gave place before long to public controversy.

During my presidency in 1918 I had a big argument in the *Newspaper World* with Mr. George Springfield (President of the Institute, 1920-1921), H. M. Richardson intervening. Mr. Springfield's main contention was that a joint wages demand made by Institute and Union acting in co-operation was more likely to succeed than separate action, and in support of that he asserted that " the Institute's minimum of two and a half guineas a week for provincial journalists is being conceded as frequently as is the Union's minimum of two guineas." In reply I pointed out that there was no such Union minimum as he spoke of. The only minima got by agreement with a proprietors' federation were those secured by the Union in London. I claimed that changes in the Institute's wages schemes showed insufficient mastery of the problem, hasty action, and the extreme complexity of the whole subject. Sometimes the Union demands were not quite so high as the schedules displayed by the Institute but the Union never took action till it was fully persuaded of the wisdom of its demands. Hence proprietors' tributes to our " businesslike proposals." Pointing out that the Union had not yet formulated a scheme of national minima I said : " That will come in due time, and the caution displayed will probably prevent a *faux pas* such as that which the Institute has just committed. I can promise Mr. Springfield that when the Union does act it will act effectively."

All the same I welcomed his enthusiasm on the question of salaries. Richardson explained that the two guinea minimum referred to was that recommended by the Newspaper Society in April, 1918, after Union representations on the inadequacy of

wages on weekly papers. "But the Union was no more the parent of that minimum than it was of the 25/- minimum or maximum paid by many newspaper proprietors before the Union was born and when the Institute was at its strongest." In a conciliatory rejoinder Mr. Springfield admitted that his reference to the minimum was "inaccurately phrased," but devoted his main points to breaking down the barriers to joint action. "Let us with good humour and common sense," he protested, "see if we cannot help on the cause we all have at heart by removing the merely artificial obstacles to joint action when opportunity arises. I don't ask for unity—at any rate yet. Each organisation suits certain temperaments better than the other. I tell all journalists who speak to me about it to join both, if they can, or either, but join one . . . Bad pay, uncertain tenure, untoward conditions, are the real giants to fight, not mere scarecrows like 'proprietorial influence' in the Institute." He mentioned that he held shares in the journal that employed him (the reference, I think, was to *London Opinion*) and called himself, therefore, a "wicked proprietor." Apparently he did not know that the holding of shares was not necessarily a bar to Union membership. At any rate he emphasised that the members of the Institute of proprietorial status were a "mere fraction" of the whole. Richardson's reply was frigid. It concluded:

> If the tone of this letter is even more chilly than an English autumn, Mr. Springfield must forgive me; when I have forgiven him for saying that "of course" only "a mere fraction of the whole (of the Institute) have some proprietorial qualification." I turn to the "Institute's register of members in effective membership," and I find there the name of a wealthy newspaper proprietor who pays his reporters salaries below those of a carter. I run through the list as far as the end of the towns in the E category and compare the names with those of the few newspaper proprietors given in Sell's Directory, and discover that out of 175 names of effective members, there are 25 of newspaper proprietors. How many of the remaining 150 are proprietors I cannot profess to know, but of the 19 members in Manchester (in 1917 Grey book) three are proprietors, one is a publican, and of the remainder thirteen are eligible for membership of the Union, and eight of these actually are members of the Union. I shall not go deeper into the matter.
>
> Such analytical and argumentative powers as we may possess must be concerned with proprietors in their proper economic role. The Whitley Committee has recognized the nonsense of men attempting to sit straddle legs across a conference table. It may be necessary, sooner or later, to analyze the complete membership of the Institute. It is a formidable task for a busy man at present. But time will soften the task. Meanwhile, we are too busy attempting to get proprietors (Institute members among them) to pay living wages. I commend that cause to the Institute. And do not let it be deterred by any polite concern as to whether it is hindering us. It is not.

Mr. Springfield did not attempt to counter this. C. P. Robertson joined in the fray to demonstrate the unreality of the

claim that the Institute was a trade Union, or at least equal to one. He too, hit hard: "One has only to consult the record of the Institute's activities to show how lamentably it failed when it had a clear field to itself. Its very weakness is demonstrated by the artful campaign which it has engineered to link up with the Union and thus maintain an existence in an age which has no place for failures. Its days are as clearly numbered as are the Kaiser's." This illustrates the perils of prophecy; the Institute to-day is still in active existence.

The question of trade union status has cropped up several times. In 1920 the Institute announced that the Registrar of Friendly Societies had recognised it as a trade union. Robertson took occasion to compare the two bodies in the *Journalist*, of which he was then the editor. The professional register of the Institute showed a total strength of 1,608, compared with the Union membership of 4,343. Excluding Ireland, which was the province of the Irish Association of Journalists, and the overseas groups, the totals were: Institute 1,287; Union 4,114. The Institute total comprised not only proprietors, but managers, authors, and others "certainly not working journalists." In 1903, it was stated, the Institute had over 3,000 members and about the same in 1907, when the Union started. In 1924 Mr. Frederick Peaker made the welkin ring with lusty shouts. Although he had vowed by all the gods of Fleet Street that about the Institute there was "no crude trade unionism," the General Secretary of that body was issuing a circular letter to newspaper proprietors enclosing an official certificate that the Institute was a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union Act, 1913, and stating that they were desirous of proving to proprietors "that both legally and technically, the Institute completely fulfils the definition."

The fact that Mr. Peaker himself at that particular moment was striving to convince everybody that the Institute was a trade union—of the decent sort, of course—gave Richardson a priceless opportunity of leg-pulling *in excelsis*. He devoted a page in the *Journalist* to showing that the Institute was not a real trade union, with documentary support, and concluded: "The mere certificate of trade unionism is as valueless as a Bass label on an empty bottle." To be fair to Mr. Peaker it must be placed on record that in 1919 —after the Union had broken ground with the metropolitan and provincial organisations of proprietors— he issued, in his capacity as chairman of the London District of the Institute, a strongly-worded circular opening with the sentence: "We are out for a

real 'live' movement for local and national action to secure agreements for adequate salaries and reasonable working hours." They intended to adopt "definite and prompt measures" in regard to every newspaper office in the London District, "in the first instance by means of a conference with the N.P.A." A basic standard of pay was suggested and journalists were classed in three grades—"experienced," "qualified" and "responsible." Minimum scales were "suggested" for each grade. The circular was accompanied by a form asking for detailed information of existing conditions, to supply the District Committee with facts to proceed upon. Six months later Mr. Peaker issued a circular, as from the London district, detailing the rates of pay, the grades of paper and of men, and the working hours "recognised" by the Institute. Unfortunately this elaborate scheme did not secure "recognition" in the only effective quarter, namely, the organised proprietors. To complete the trade union "complex," it must be mentioned that the General Secretary of the Institute, Mr. Stewart Nicholson, in April, 1942, published the "categorical statement" that the Institute was a trade union, and had been officially recognised as such in connection with the National Arbitration Order, 1940.

Definite official efforts by the two organisations in concert were made to achieve unification. One started in 1921 and another in 1927. Both failed. The possibilities of fusion had been discussed many times between journalists and openly in their own papers, but in 1920 these talks assumed active and businesslike shape, and it became evident that they were more than the whispering campaigns which in the past had come and gone. A past President of the Institute, Mr. James Sykes, of Leeds, gave a strong lead and had the support of many colleagues. Among them Mr. A. G. Gardiner, while loyal to Institute ideals, paid tribute to the effective work of the Union, and contended for an allocation of spheres of work. The Union would continue the "practical work" which it did so ably, and the Institute would furnish the "corporate inspiration of the higher functions of journalism." Mr. George Springfield, then the Institute President, confessed that he had always deplored the "split in the ranks" (his term for the start of the Union) and had never ceased to work for re-union.

A discordant note was sounded by Sir Robert Donald (President of the Institute in 1913) in a letter to *The Times* in August, 1921, Protest was made by Institute men against his "gibes." Extracts

from his realistic summary of the position are appended:

The Institute of Journalists is holding its annual conference at Bournemouth on the 31st, and members are assured of "a hearty welcome and a good time." The best way that the conference can spend its time is in making an inquiry into the position and prospects of the Institute. The Institute is in a bad way financially; it is losing old members, and not getting new ones. The membership of 2,007 is less than it has been for many years. The deficit on the year is £630—more than one-third of the amount received in subscriptions—£1,568. The secretariat salaries are about 55 per cent. of the income from members, and with office expenses nearly 60 per cent. The vigorous rival organization, the National Union of Journalists, without the advantage of age or of a Royal Charter or of endowment, has three times as many members—all working journalists—and nearly four times the subscriptions, and only spends 15 per cent. on its officials or 22 per cent. with office expenses. The sum expended by the Institute for the direct benefit of its members in salaries and grants, is represented by its overdraft. The Institute feels that something should be done as the item of £5 10s. for "propaganda" appears in the accounts. The Institute of Journalists may be proud of the good services which it has rendered the profession of journalism in the past, but it cannot live on traditions, or on its expensive secretariat, or on its hall or its Royal Charter; it has reached a critical stage in its existence. It is drifting to a position between the National Union, which is the recognised authority for collective bargaining, and the Newspaper Press Fund, and unless it does something else at Bournemouth than have "a good time," its representative status will soon go, and its usefulness will gradually disappear. It may even be too late to check the downward tendency, but the Institute has an opportunity now to serve the profession which may not recur. The National Union, fired with its easy success in face of the feebleness of the Institute, is now assuming a policy which does not make for the greater efficiency of the journalist or for raising the standard of the profession.

The criticism of the policy of its rival contained in the last sentence was poor solace for a body so ruthlessly pilloried by one of its own prominent men. Feeling in favour of fusion developed strongly in Yorkshire, and important moves were made at Bristol, which district claimed both presidents when tangible steps were taken, namely, Thomas Jay (Union) and Mr. Charles Wells (Institute). In September, 1921, letters passed between the two presidents (Mr. George Springfield was still the Institute President then). At first the latter defined the proposed conference as being "for the promotion of improved relations between our respective societies," but Jay ruled out any discussion of a "working agreement" and insisted "that the aim must be to discuss the possibility of one organisation." The Institute complied, and the way was clear for the conference. There had, of course, been some preliminary skirmishing before this stage was reached. Jay sends me the following note:

With my election as President of the Union in March, 1921, there was an intensification of interest in the question of fusion, particularly so because another West Country journalist was officially concerned for the Institute—Charles Wells, of Bristol, a well known man held in the highest respect and loved by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

I was inundated with letters and questions from all parts but did not commit myself, feeling that the constitution of the two bodies practically made it impossible to hope for any success, even if we got down to discussion. But the campaign seemed to grow. "Now," everybody seemed to say, "is the great chance to explore the possibilities of fusion and never were the prospects better." I had long held the opinion, although never very optimistic of the ultimate result, that at some time or another this question of fusion would have to be examined once for all, if only for the reason that all journalists must be agreed that one organisation for working journalists was not merely the ideal to be aimed for, but was in the best interests of the journalists of this country and the newspaper industry as a whole.

I declined to make any definite advances privately or officially, but I must explain now for the first time that I chanced to meet a prominent official of the Institute of Journalists (not the then President) in a Fleet Street lounge, and we had a long and friendly, but very frank, discussion. I suspected that my friend Charles Wells, who knew pretty well my movements in Fleet Street about that time, was responsible for this "accidental" meeting. He would never admit it, but always laughed it off, his smile no doubt being due to the fact that "it worked." He would never say what he knew about it . . . and now we shall never know. It was sufficient for me that I adored Charles Wells, *doyen* of West Country journalists, whose heart was of pure gold and who never knowingly did a mean action, nor would he stoop to subterfuge, or what might be called "political trickery." However, after a long discussion with the member of the Institute, he asked me point blank if I would meet two representatives of the Institute Council for a private and exploratory talk, if that suggestion was put to me in writing by Mr. Charles Wells. I immediately decided that the time was really ripe for this matter to be considered very fully and thus clear the decks one way or the other, so I agreed to meet these two representatives, but said that I would do so quite unofficially and that in no way would I, or could I, commit my Executive Council.

I realised that such an action might be misunderstood, and might not, and could not, be expected to please even a few of my colleagues of the N.E.C. So one evening a few days later I met George Springfield and A. E. Watson, of the *Daily Telegraph*, now its editor. The rendezvous was, by a happy choice, in Chandos-street, at the office of *London Opinion* (now a Newnes publication) whose editor Lincoln Springfield, brother of George Springfield, gave me my real chance as a humorous writer. This all made for a very friendly atmosphere. We discussed the problems, and the whole talk simply bristled with them. This went on for a considerable time and I place on record that both George Springfield and E. A. Watson did their utmost, and were personally prepared to go far, if only a way could be found to bring about fusion of the two bodies.

The outcome of that meeting was a suggestion that the Executives of the two organisations should meet to go into the matter. Springfield and Watson suggested that, with their President, Charles Wells, they would endeavour to get their Executive Council to seek a meeting with the N.E.C. of the Union. I agreed that any suggestion they might make along those lines would be placed before my Executive Council. This I did and there was a great deal of discussion. Many members of the N.E.C. were not prepared even to go that far, but it was decided to accept the suggestion of the joint meeting of the two Executive Councils. It has to be admitted that I soon sensed, among many members of the N.E.C., the feeling that I ought not to have had these preliminary talks without official sanction.

Jay was not the only Union president to be frowned upon by some of his executive colleagues because of an apparent tendency to yield a little to Institute seductions. One instance in my own experience has already been recorded. J. H. Harley tells of

another, when he had a " breeze " with Watts over his disposition to accept from Sir Robert Donald an invitation to an Institute annual dinner. Each of us was too sound to be deflected from the path of Union rectitude, but these incidents revealed in the ranks of the Union an instinctive suspicion that was due both to overt Institute opposition, and to a belief in the existence of covert antagonism. At Eastertide, 1921, the feeling in favour of fusion in the Yorkshire District of the Institute was running strongly. T. K. Sledge, whose election to the presidency of the Union in 1924 was a recognition of long and faithful service, was of course closely in touch at Leeds with the pulse of affairs, and he and Jay kept each other well informed of developments. As showing Jay's keenness he writes on April 19, 1921, to Sledge: " I am quite confident that once we can get together—and it would be a sign of strength on our part and not weakness if we meet them —we can hammer out some scheme. Once we get to grips, once we get a meeting, I should like to keep my teeth in until we could proclaim one solid union for working journalists."

A month later Jay writes under the spell of his ideal:

> It is my duty to do everything in my power to further and foster the interests of our profession and those engaged in it, irrespective of what particular organisation they may be in. That being so, and providing an approach was made to us, and providing of course that we are not called upon to surrender the vital principles of our organisation for which many of us have fought so hard and made such sacrifice, I for one would leave no avenue unexplored, and spare no energy, time or trouble to bring about one solid organisation for working journalists and one solid organisation for employers . . . There may be difficulties and many obstacles, but as a young man charged with the responsibility of our organisation, I regard difficulties and obstacles as something to walk right up to with our coats off, and not to try to dodge round them.

A prominent member of the Yorkshire District of the Institute wrote to Sledge in March, 1921, stating that he had openly advocated an approach to the Union with a view to amalgamation at a district meeting, and stated in reply to a question that the first step essential to success would be readiness to surrender the principle of admitting proprietors to membership. " The idea was well received," he wrote, " and I feel confident that there are very few members of the Institute who would not be willing to reject the proprietors, who, after all, are now very few, and are not the earthliest good to us . . . No one is more ready than I am to acknowledge the great work the N.U.J. has done and I am quite well aware that they could not be asked, and should not be, to surrender even one of the main principles for which they have fought so hardly and well. I feel sure of this, that there are many members of the Institute who, from an old feeling of loyalty, do

not care to surrender membership, but would yet gladly see, shall I say amalgamation with or absorption into, the N.U.J."

In view of his responsible position in the District the writer naturally added that the letter was quite unofficial. Six months later he wrote endorsing Jay's action in going straight for fusion, stating that practically all his colleagues in the Yorkshire District supported that and had not the least desire to see what was called " a working agreement." He admitted " that some old members of the Institute, chiefly in London, would regret to see the separate identity of the Institute merged in another body," but maintained that such a sentimental feeling, honourable enough in its way, should not be allowed to interfere with " a complete and honourable amalgamation." Sledge was able to tell his Institute correspondent that the movement had his entire sympathy, and also that the Union Executive was favourably inclined to the idea of a meeting on the subject. He has sent me the notes he made at the time when the matter was first raised in the Executive of which he was a member. I give a few points here as interesting impressions recorded at the time of the attitude of Union leaders to a question bristling with difficulties :

Haslam says times have changed and it may be necessary to modify the attitude of the Union slightly for the purpose of gaining some definite advantage, but it must be made clear that we are not climbing down, but trying to save the face of the Institute. They are growing weaker and we are growing stronger. A suggestion had been made to him in Manchester from the Institute side that it would be well if we could form one solid body of working journalists. The question is how can it be done without seeming to contravene Union policy. Brown said that during his presidency (1920) he had correspondence with Dr. Macnamara (Minister of Labour) and he feels confident that Dr. Macnamara had been asked by the other side to take soundings with a view to seeing if something could not be done. Foster thinks the movement will meet with strong opposition in London, where the Union think they have got a new lease of life. He suggested that Union men encourage members of the Institute in all our districts everywhere to talk over this matter and by personal appeal to them to get them to adopt a sympathetic attitude towards amalgamation. Back says the real obstacle to the movement is the Council of the Institute, which is hidebound, out of sympathy with popular feeling in its own body and afraid to get into touch with it. His experience of the Institute meetings in Newcastle last September demonstrated that. The rank and file of the Institute members should demand a ballot vote, which would demonstrate that the Council is quite out of sympathy with the rank and file. Mansfield was very favourably impressed, but thinks there will be difficulty with London members. How would *Daily Telegraph* men, for instance, like the idea of putting themselves in opposition to Lord Burnham, or of turning Lord Burnham out of their organisation ? There are many questions of this kind that will arise, apart from the disposal of funds, which will be a serious problem, though it should not be insoluble.

Sledge was one of the first Union stalwarts in Leeds. When he became executive member for the West Riding in 1917 he

was a sub-editor on the *Yorkshire Post*. When the formation of the Union was in progress and many were saying loudly that a trade union was "degrading" for journalists, he faced the objections and criticisms of colleagues in one of the strongest Institute offices in the provinces, and boldly took up active work for the Union. His example had its effect. He was the first of the seniors in the "subbing" room of the *Y.P.* to take the plunge. When he started newspaper work as a youth in 1884 he went straight into the sub-editors' room, without any previous newspaper experience. His job first was to sort out copy and make himself generally useful. In his early "twenties" he would tackle a heavy Parliament single-handed, and in those days Home Rule was "hot stuff." His pay had then risen from the initial 10/- a week to 25/- or 30/-, and he knew that his brother, a hand compositor in the office, with less responsibility, was earning far more. So he boldly went to the editor and was raised to 45/- a week. A football edition on Saturdays came along and he was requisitioned for it, at an extra remuneration of 2/6d. for the day. Nights off were a rarity; in desperation he rebelled, and got the half-crown doubled. Some of the morning paper compositors worked on Saturday afternoons and got much more than young Sledge, but then they had a Union to back them. "I was a member of the Institute in those days," he says, "and used to wonder what earthly use it was to stand by and see poor devils sweated like I was. I learned a few things then." An imposition which he, and all journalists of that and even later times, remember was the idea that one was always on call; even on the occasional night off there was the feeling "that the office rope was round your neck." During one holiday season, he recalls, the staff as a whole lost 27 of their nights off, which were never made up and for which no extra pay was given. Later, things improved with the engagement of holiday relief men. It needed courage in that office, and in those days, to join the new union, but Sledge had it, and ultimately had the satisfaction of seeing more Union than Institute men on the staff.

The hopeful members in both Institute and Union, and they were many, who saw a good omen in the opening of fusion negotiations on Armistice Day, November 11, 1921, were fated to be disappointed. It was a sincere effort to adjust conflicting attitudes to a mutually acceptable compromise, and deserved a better result. A fair statement of the issues involved means some detail. The two Executives had two full days' discussion

on Nov. 11 and 12, and unanimously agreed that it was desirable that there be one organisation. The Union minute proceeds:

It was also agreed *nem. con.* that "it be submitted to the councils of the Institute and the N.U.J. that the qualification for membership of the one organisation of journalists be based upon the following formula": "That such organisation shall consist of full members being working journalists who are and have been for three years employed on a journalistic staff or staffs and/or who are and have been for three years solely or mainly dependent upon their own journalistic work. Members of the Institute of Journalists who on November 11, 1921, or a date to be agreed upon were newspaper proprietors, directors, managers or managing-editors may be associate members of the organisation. As such they shall not vote or speak at or attend meetings of the organisation except social meetings. Members who may subsequently come into such positions may be relegated to the Associate category. Proprietors, directors, managers and managing-editors other than those who were members of the Institute at the above mentioned date shall not be eligible for membership of the organisation. A working journalist shall not be precluded from membership by reason of his holding shares in a newspaper." A committee of five for each body was then appointed to draft a constitution, and investigate the respective finances.

At the second meeting of the full drafting committee on February 2, from the course of discussion it became apparent that the Council of the Institute had not approved of the formula given above. On being questioned the Institute representatives stated that the formula had not been considered, although the Council had met soon after the first conference. The Union representatives then stated that it would be as well to adjourn the meeting to enable the Institute Council to consider the formula and reach a decision on it, as the Union was not prepared to go further in the direction of including proprietors. The following minute was agreed to:

"The meeting was adjourned to allow the Institute representatives to consult the Council as to the formula agreed to at the November meeting and draft rules Nos. 1, 17, and 18, [carrying the formula into effect.] On March 3 the Union received the following resolution as having been unanimously adopted by the Council of the Institute:—That this Council regrets that a successful issue of the negotiations between the Institute and the N.U.J. seems now to be impossible except on the basis of the entire obliteration of the Institute and the sacrifice of its distinctive principle of including in active membership all classes of *bona fide* journalists. Desiring, however, that there should be some machinery for united action as and when necessary among organised journalists, this Council instructs the Executive to approach the N.U.J. with a proposal that there should be formed a Federation of Journalists, of which the Institute and the National Union should be the first two constituent members." The Union Executive in reply stated that it would be futile to call a further meeting of the Joint Drafting Committee. Richardson added:—"My Executive is surprised to learn that your Council was unanimous in rejecting the formula which was agreed to in November, as at that time certain of your members approved it. Moreover, my Executive is disappointed that your Council has rejected the proposal for fusion and the draft constitution without consulting your members either by ballot or some other method. With reference to the suggestion that you should approach us with a proposal to form a Federation . . . my Executive would be prepared to examine any proposal made, but at present it fails to see what good purpose such a Federation could serve. It would mean a recession from the decision arrived at in November that one organisation of journalists was desirable. We intend to publish the correspondence and a statement on the negotiations."

The Union representatives on the drafting committee were the President (T. Jay), T. Foster, W. Meakin, F. J. Mansfield, and

W. Veitch (hon. treasurer); the Institute members were Mr. George Springfield (President), Messrs. C. Wells, J. H. Farthing, F. Peaker and A. E. Watson. The secretaries of both organisations were *ex-officio* members. This committee had done some rather strenuous work, splitting up into sub-committees to deal with finance, rules and legal aspects. The results are to be seen in a whole sheaf of typewritten reports now in front of me. The Finance sub-committee prepared full statements on the finances of both bodies and came to the conclusion that a united organisation could depend on a minimum membership of 6,000 at the start, allowances having been made for the 260 who were then members of both, and for the possible loss of proprietorial and other members. They did not offset that loss by any probable gain, although they felt strongly that with only one organisation the reluctance of many journalists to join either of the existing bodies would disappear. The two constitutions were analysed and summarised for comparison. Also there was put in a proposal framed by Mr. W. Reeves Fowkes (of the Yorkshire district of the Institute) for the formation of one organisation, to be called the British Society of Journalists, or other approved title, and to consist of two sections with strictly defined functions, neither clashing nor overlapping. The Institute section would retain its charter and its membership (including proprietors), and be the "professional branch," the National Union section would devote itself primarily to "the economic side of the profession." The author drew up a detailed scheme of operation, but it went into limbo with all the other products of this abortive conference.

A good deal of contention, some of it rather bitter, followed, which is not surprising when the thorny nature of the problem is remembered. At the Institute Council, reported in their *Journal* for February-March, 1922, the President (Mr. C. Wells) said that two vital questions had arisen: (1) Shall we surrender our Charter for trade union rules? (2) Shall we agree to exclude from full and active membership of the proposed new organisation all journalists whose success has taken them into the more responsible positions? (This is the euphemistic way in which the Institute generally refer to their proprietor or "executive" members. In their view a *bona fide* journalist should be qualified to rank in membership with employed journalists although be becomes a proprietor or managing editor, in spite of the change in his economic status.) The Union was unwilling to allow full and active membership to proprietors, directors, managers and

managing editors, and would only give them admission to the associate class. As the Union granted that privilege to its own members on their promotion to the higher posts, that did not seem to be a real concession. The Union Executive stated that they were satisfied that their rank and file would reject any further concession. The Institute representatives most strenuously insisted that there should be a better place provided for the leading responsible journalists—the men and women who were best known to the public by reason of the quality or responsibility of their work. Under the proposed rule for the new organisation associate members would not be entitled to hold office, to take part in any of the proceedings, or be present at any of the business meetings. Also no journalist could be an associate who was not on Nov. 11, or other agreed date, a full member, so that no " outside journalist " in the barred classes could in future be elected.

Mr. Wells emphasised that the Institute had been met with perfect friendliness and the Union desired one professional body as much as the Institute did, but there was no apparent prospect of the fundamental difference on the question of membership qualification being bridged. Mr. George Springfield said the Union formerly was obsessed by " Instituphobia," and it was clear that they were still dominated by ideas to which the Institute had never bowed, and he hoped never would. The Union believed in the Prussian idea of force, and its ruling men regarded the Institute as a stumbling block to be got out of the way, so that every journeyman journalist could be compelled to join the Union, which in alliance with the printing trades, could gain its ends by the threat of a general strike in the newspaper industry. These ideas were crazy and shocking and plenty of Union men would repudiate them, but while that spirit prevailed there could be no sincere union between the two bodies. The Institute's principle was co-operation rather than coercion.

Captain Arthur Watson (ex-chairman, London District) said that the Union's ways were those of an industrial trade union and that was not the best thing for journalism. The Institute ought not to play Jonah to the Union whale. Mr. F. Hinde (Hon. Treasurer) frankly said that he did not regret the failure. In their membership they must have quality as well as quantity, and their conception of a journalistic society was very much higher than that professed by the Union. The Institute also had a Charter and many professions would give much to have such a Charter. Mr. Springfield brought out the interesting point that

the real reason why the Institute claimed to be a trade union (it had, he said, always had the powers) was that in certain districts, where antagonism to the Institute had warped and distorted decent feeling and conduct, there were threats of the printers being asked to refuse to handle copy of members of the Institute, as not produced by trade union labour. The Council passed a resolution, the significance of which requires no emphasis:

"The Council recommends that there be set up within the Institute, an Economic Section, to deal solely with questions of salaries, terms and conditions of employment, and allied matters; the membership of which shall consist only of those dependent on their own journalistic work; and in which no proprietor, director, business manager or managing-editor shall vote, attend meetings, or hold office." Its mover, Mr. Springfield, spoke of the "proprietorial bogey" as a ghost which they must provide a means of laying. Mr. Wells expounded the Institute attitude in negotiations thus: "We did not trouble ourselves about proprietors as such. The Institute never has done so. The men we wanted to keep and bring in were those who were leading members of the profession, but none the less working journalists. We would have agreed to relegate those who were proprietors, exclusively or first and foremost, to a non-active class. We would have agreed to put directors, managers and other dreadful people into a position where they could have been kept away when timid members in less exalted positions wanted to talk about wages and conditions of employment. But our friends could not see their way to recommend to the general body of their members any such proposals."

A long wrangle followed, and at the end of 1922 the Union found it necessary to issue a statement of its case. The suggestion that the Union wished the simple absorption of the Institute was repudiated. It was a fair assumption from the known facts that the Institute did not intend to give up its Charter, and that constitution, if accepted, would govern the new organisation:

At the outset of the conference the main problems were: (1) affiliation to the mechanical newspaper workers; (2) admission of proprietors, managers and directors to full membership. The implications of affiliation were fully explained, and the attempt to disentangle definitions of a "proprietor" led the Union men to refuse to accept for full membership anyone who by virtue of his position had the right to engage or dismiss journalists without reference to any other authority. The formula on the membership qualification which the Institute Council rejected, was accepted by the majority of the Institute men at the Drafting Committee, and afterwards carried in full conference with no vote in opposition. At the first conference Institute men asked the Union men if they were inexorably wedded to the affiliation policy. The reply was that it had been decided by ballot vote of the whole members. On the proposal of Mr. Peaker (Institute), seconded by F. J. Mansfield (N.U.J.), it was unanimously agreed "that it be a condition of amalgamation that a *plebiscite* of the whole members of the one organisation be taken as to affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. and the T.U.C." This decision was reached in December, 1921, at the first meeting of the Drafting Committee. In March, Jay and Richardson spoke at Union meetings against withdrawal from affiliation. That was consistent with their well-known views, and was of course no departure from the idea of the *plebiscite*, which they had accepted. Yet Mr. Peaker, writing as President-elect of the Institute in September declared that the negotiations really broke down

on the question of affiliation, and maintained that the "proprietor" difficulty was not the cause of the breakdown, as on that question an accommodation could have been reached. It became quite farcical, these rival allocations of blame for the failure. The Union said: "We believe that the negotiations broke down because the Institute had learned from an impartial high authority on the legal question that it could not amalgamate with a trade union without forfeiting its Royal Charter."

All that can now be said is that, although the ostensible cause actually put forward in the Council resolution already quoted was the difference on membership qualification, consideration for the Charter may have been the real reason for the mention in that vague declaration of the menace of "obliteration of the Institute." The Federation idea was duly submitted to the Union, but rejected as in effect a form of "working agreement" which the Union always treated as impracticable. Now follows the substance of an opinion obtained by the Drafting Committee, from Mr. Henry Slesser, the legal expert on trade union law, afterwards Lord Justice Slesser:

Questions put to Counsel:

1. Whether there is anything in the Charter By-Laws and Standing Orders of the Institute, which is incompatible with the aims, objects and rules of the N.U.J.
2. Whether, assuming that the Institute and the Union were merged into one organisation, the Royal Charter would cease to be effective.
3. Whether, in the event of a new organisation being formed, it would be necessary to dissolve the Union.

Counsel replied:—The N.U.J. is a trade union whose objects and rules proclaim it to be unlawful at common law by reason of its being in restraint of trade. Thus rule 7, in particular, provides that a member may be expelled from the union who accepts a remuneration at a lower rate than that provided by the schedule, and rule 10, which gives power to the N.E.C. to call strikes. It is abundantly clear that a disobedience of the rules may involve the forfeiture of benefits and such a condition of affairs renders the union, as a whole, in restraint of trade. In my opinion the Institute, which is a common law corporation and also a trade union certified as such by the Registrar under section 2 (3) of the Trade Union Act, 1913, is a trade union whose objects as a whole are not in restraint of trade, and it is consequently a body lawful at common law. Apart from the provision of section 2 (5) of the Trade Union Act, 1913, that a certificate of the Registrar that a trade union is a trade union within the meaning of the Act, shall so long as it is in force, be conclusive for all purposes, I should have had the gravest doubt whether a trade union which is a corporation could, subsequently to its incorporation, constitute itself unlawful at common law by being in restraint of trade. Section 3 of the Trade Union Act, 1871, does not in terms, render a trade union, unlawful at common law, lawful, but only provides that its unlawful purposes shall not render void or voidable any agreement or trust, and consequently, notwithstanding the statute, a trade union as a whole may still be lawful, and it is difficult to contemplate that a body receiving a charter would not incur a liability to forfeiture if it were to become unlawful at common law.

It would appear that if the Institute were to render itself unlawful at Common Law, it would incur a liability to forfeiture by writ of *scire facias*, and the risk of such forfeiture would justify any corporator in going to the Court and asking for an injunction to restrain the corporation from so imperilling its character. On the other hand, in so far as both the Union and the Institute are trade unions, they fall within the provisions of the

Trade Union Amalgamation Act, 1917, which provides that any two or more trade unions may become amalgamated together as one union if, in the case of each or every trade union, at a ballot being taken, the votes of at least 50 per cent. of the members entitled to vote thereat are recorded, and of the votes recorded those in favour of the proposal exceed by 20 per cent. or more the votes against the proposal. . .

1. I answer question one by saying that the charter of the Institute and the rules of the Union are incompatible, in the sense that the charter of the Institute is not in restraint of trade and the rules of the Union are in restraint of trade.

2. That if the Union and the Institute were merged, the charter of the Institute would be liable to forfeiture, and that, possibly, the amalgamation might be restrained by a dissentient corporator, but a corporation is not necessarily dissolved by parting with all its property. The corporation may of course surrender its charter to the King for the purpose of affecting a dissolution, and probably in the event of an almost unanimous decision to amalgamate, this would be the safest course to pursue. But the King is not bound to accept the surrender, though I do not contemplate any very serious obstacle upon this head.

3. Assuming that the difficulty of corporation is overcome, the powers given to amalgamating trade unions under the Trade Union Act, 1917, would render dissolution of the union unnecessary

The policy to be pursued must depend upon the knowledge of the sentiments of the corporators of the Institute which those responsible for the conduct of its affairs will best appreciate ; they will know whether there will be any opposition to the amalgamation. It seems to me that there is otherwise danger of a motion restraining the proceedings for the reasons above stated and of subsequent opposition to the surrender of the charter. But if the societies are practically unanimous I think the amalgamation could now proceed. But I think in such an event it would be safer for the Institute to surrender its charter directly it is assured that the necessary numbers in the ballot have been obtained to satisfy the Trade Union Act, 1917, and before the new amalgamated society is registered.

The keen disappointment in the Yorkshire District of the Institute at the frustration of their efforts was forcibly expressed in a letter to Sledge by the high official before referred to :

We are holding a meeting soon to make our opinion known to the Executive and to ask for a better explanation of the failure than we have so far received. For myself, I have read the account in the *Journalist* and the Institute *Journal* and I cannot resist the conviction that the blame for the failure rests upon our Executive and their negotiators. If they were so concerned for the proprietorial element why on earth did they enter the conference at all ? Fowkes's scheme is quite farcical. Again, our Executive had plainly no right to break off negotiations without consulting the members. We shall press them for a better explanation. Failing that, my mind is clear. If we cannot have a united body by wise amalgamation then we must try for it by individual action. We shall give our Executive one more chance. If they will not toe the mark then, I shall leave the Institute and apply for admission to the Union, advising others to do the same. But I am truly sorry the amalgamation effort has so far, and apparently so hopelessly, failed. A united body is so necessary. I am clear in my mind that Mr. Jay did his best for it, but, as you know, I always feared our London wooden-heads. As for the sacred Charter, I and scores of others in the Institute, don't care a d——n about it.

Jay's impressions of the *dèbacle* while it was still " hot news " were conveyed in a letter to Sledge on March 14 :

I certainly think that working journalist members of the Institute should have been consulted about the matter before it was rejected in this way.

Quite a number of members of the Union are glad the thing has broken down, but what I am anxious about is the doubt whether the working journalist members of the Institute will ever get the true story. . . . I have made an honest and sincere effort to meet the other side. The Institute Council felt that fusion meant the obliteration of the Institute, but what was not made plain to them I imagine is that it meant the obliteration of the Union as well . . . We had prepared the draft rules of the new organisation and the members of the Institute side of the Drafting Committee, including Mr. Springfield, admitted that there was very little dividing us on the remainder of the rules but he held tight to the employer question, or as he calls them " employer journalists " as distinct from employers purely . . . I can only say that I would not have accepted the responsibility on behalf of the Union of breaking off these negotiations without sending the whole thing back to our members for a decision. That seems to me the only democratic way, but it is not for me to teach their Council what I regard as democratic control.

The truce over, the clashes of patrols resounded once more. Robertson, in the *Journalist*, saw the discussions of the Institute Council as manœuvring for position. " Responsible journalists," whom the Union were said to exclude, was a fine propaganda phrase. The Union's whole point was that when a journalist becomes a proprietor, a manager, or a managing editor, his functions become primarily managerial and he must view things first and foremost from the employer's point of view. Nothing else could be expected. But no " responsible journalist " who remained a journalist primarily had ever been refused by the Union nor would be under the proposed new rules. The Institute was playfully likened to Low's Coalition Donkey, with proprietors on the one side and other members on the other pulling in opposite ways, and making no headway at all. In a metaphorical passage in his presidential address at the A.D.M., at Nottingham in April, 1922, Jay said he did not enter the ranks of the bridge builders with the confidence of a man laying down four aces. The gulf was great and the bridge had to be sound, but as they gingerly walked across it they found in the middle some huge bolts, but very weak, with some ornamental nuts on them, the usual hard nuts of the employer-journalist type. They told the bridge builders that they did not object to those bolts being used for purely ornamental purposes, as aids to the beauty of the bridge, but they must not be placed where they might, when some heavy burden was on the bridge, give way and let the whole structure down. But the Institute refused to remove the bolts put there by Mid-Victorian, out-of-date, engineers. " The case for the Union," declared Jay, " could not be better put than by the Institute itself, for they contemplate setting up an ' economic section,' in which ' no proprietor,

director or manager shall have part'—a candid, though tardy recognition of the bedrock principle upon which the Union was founded."

Richardson visualised the Institute innovation as an attempt to save itself from extinction. "The Institute is not paying its way. It is being kept alive, for what purpose? Because it is too proud to die for the sake of the working journalist, just as it has been too proud to fight for him." There was a flicker of revived interest in the fusion scheme when in June, 1922, the Institute Council invited the N.E.C. "to formulate a scheme for the amalgamation of the two societies which does not involve the simple absorption of the Institute, with a view to its submission to the votes of the whole of the members of both organisations; and/or to meet the Institute representatives to discuss some form of co-operation between, or federation of, the two societies for common objects." The Union in reply said that if the Institute Council still rejected the November formula it seemed useless to proceed. Any scheme must be drafted by both executive bodies, and not by one or the other. If the formula were accepted the Union would be glad to have a meeting, but not upon any form of co-operation or federation, which the A.D.M. had rejected. There is no record, as far as I can discover, of an Institute response. Possibly the Institute approach was due to a resolution passed at the 1922 A.D.M. regretting the breakdown of the fusion negotiations and expressing readiness to re-enter negotiations "at any moment when the Institute is willing to accept the formula agreed upon by the conference of the executives of the two bodies."

In July, 1925, the Union Executive deemed it necessary to take notice of intensified Institute propaganda, and Richardson had an article of two whole pages in the *Journalist*. Mr. Peaker, then the President of the Institute, replied that he had attempted to create a better feeling between the two bodies, but it was obvious that the Union's General Secretary did not want that. In a footnote, Haslam, the editor, said it was a mistake for Institute leaders to assume that Richardson was the villain of the piece. The N.E.C. felt so keenly the falsifications of Institute statements that the secretary was asked to make the article he originally wrote stronger. This must have been a refreshing novelty for Richardson. A letter from Mr. Reeves Fowkes, of the *Yorkshire Post*, the Institute author of a fusion scheme, appeared in the *Journalist* suggesting a ballot of the whole

membership of both bodies on the simple question: " Are you in favour of one organisation for journalists ? " Once merged the members (with the Union in a majority) could do what it liked with charter, by-laws, rules and everything in print and a committee from which all diehards were excluded would formulate a scheme acceptable to both groups. Widespread attention was attracted by an article in the *Institute Journal* in Jan.-Feb., 1926, by Mr. H. A. Taylor, who became President of the Institute in 1938, and in 1940 was the author of " Through Fifty years. An outline of the History of the Institute of Journalists." He was very critical of the Council and suggested reforms in Institute procedure. " We must cease to sneer at the Union and endeavour to acquire some of its vigour in action and skill in organisation." He mentioned that when he was a scrutineer at an Institute Conference he discovered the effective paid-up membership in a ballot and was shocked by the smallness of the total. The President refused to disclose the figures.

An even more striking tribute to the Union was paid by Mr. R. V. Walling, a member of the Union who was appointed secretary of the Institute in 1926. " I have the greatest admiration for the work of the N.U.J.," he wrote; " work which the Institute might have done but for the lethargy into which it was sunken 17 or 18 years ago, but . . . (it was a big " but ") the Union had reached the end of its tether, and the Institute could do all that the Union could do in the future and do it better." A speedy, and rather devastating reply came from the Union's National Organiser (C. J. Bundock), who put to Mr. Walling thirteen questions, including these: Can the Institute represent journalists on the Joint Industrial Council ? Has the Institute any signed agreements with the proprietors ? Can the Institute get the proprietors to " recognise " the rates which the Institute says it " recognises " ? If the Institute is a trade union why aren't its presidents trade unionists, and why are not its members dismissed from the staffs of Scottish papers which will not employ trade-unionists ? If it is not why does it say it is and why does it register as such ? The last three questions, it was suggested, might be usefully sent on to Sir Robert Bruce, President of the Institute in 1926, and editor of the *Glasgow Herald*, which became a non-union office after the General Strike in that year. Some time before this Richardson revealed that in 1918-19, when the Institute wanted to be represented at the proposed Joint Industrial Council, it actually submitted

its constitution and rules to the P. &. K.T.F., but the Federation declined to recognise the Institute as a genuine trade union.

We have now reached the threshold of the second major effort to achieve fusion, which opened on October 15, 1927. Six years of jangling had not destroyed the earnest desire in both camps for the creation of a united organisation; there were friendly, if vague, utterances by Institute leaders, which were met by more positive pronouncements for the Union. Disregarding the propaganda and rhetoric, let us note actual movements. The most important happened in Manchester on March 12, when an open meeting of journalists was held on the initiative of the Institute Council. A small number of non-Institute men was there, including H. D. Nichols, of the Union Executive. Fusion was the main theme and among the Institute speakers who declared for amalgamation were Mr. Rowland Cragg (chairman of the Manchester district of the Institute) and Mr. H. W. Buxton, of *The Times*, a member of the Council. Nichols, who has a rare capacity for concentration, brought the meeting down to earth when he said that repetition of opinion in favour of one body would never get them much further. His practical suggestion was that the Institute should ballot its members on three questions: (1) That on a fusion agreement the Institute should surrender its Charter; (2) That the qualifications for membership of the fused body should be based on the formula agreed upon by the two executives in November, 1921; (3) That when the new organisation came into existence a ballot be taken as soon as convenient on the question of affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. The next move came at the A.D.M. at Plymouth in April, 1927, when the following resolution was carried with only three dissentient votes, on the motion of H. D. Nichols: "That this A.D.M. declares its willingness to resume discussions with the Institute of Journalists with a view to the fusion of the two bodies on the basis provisionally arrived at in the negotiations of 1921-1922, provided there is no suggestion to impose on the new organisation anything which would limit its absolute freedom to determine from time to time its own constitution or its objects and methods."

A few weeks after the A.D.M. Yorkshire, true to tradition, forced the pace with a representative meeting of journalists at Leeds, addressed by H. A. Raybould, President of the Union, and Mr. Reeves Fowkes, chairman of the Yorkshire district of the Institute. Raybould insisted that the surrender of the Charter

by the Institute must precede all attempts at fusion. Mr. Fowkes argued that the new body need not be restricted under the Charter, and asserted his belief that if the Charter was the real obstacle the Institute would remove it. A resolution was passed urging that a ballot be taken in both organisations, the basis being the inclusion of all working journalists in one organisation, with no interference in the negotiation of wages, hours and working conditions by any member who was able to exercise the powers of an employer in the appointment, discharge, pay, hours or working conditions of journalists.

One of the most virile personalities in the long succession of Union leaders, zealous champion of our trade unionism, and consistent exponent of its logic, Nichols was bound to carry with him in his bold lead a large body of opinion. Moreover he was a *Manchester Guardian* man who started journalism under " Daddy " Spencer, first president of the Union, and rose to occupy his chair; a brilliant student of the famous Manchester Grammar School, who proceeded to the university and took his degree in Arts, and his " inter." in Law—a man fitted for leadership in framing policies and conducting negotiations. The merit of his lead in this Institute business was not in any new idea, but in the timeliness of the intervention. In 1911 out of his first journalistic earnings Nichols paid his first contribution as a probationer member of the N.U.J.; three years later he was an A.D.M. delegate; chairman of Manchester Branch 1920-1921; in 1921 appointed territorial member of the N.E.C. for Manchester; President of the Union in 1929. The popular estimate of him throughout our ranks was crystallised in the *Journalist* headline " Scholar, Soldier, Nujjer, Man." The last stages of the Great War saw him as a young Section Commander in a Tank Battalion in France, and he was demobilised with the rank of Captain. At the age of fifty he is a pillar of strength in home defence. He started to raise Home Guards, or L.D.V.'s as they were then called, in May, 1940, and very soon had 15,000 of them to look after! This became rather amusing, he reflects, as a " spare time job " for one whose bread-winning work was news-editing. It is possible because of a consentient firm, and the willing help of his *Guardian* colleague, C. E. Turner, who is one of my co-trustees. Nichols has made time to write me one or two letters on points I had to consult him about; in ending one rather abruptly he says: " Meanwhile I must get back to my real job, which is that of H. D. Nichols, Colonel, Commanding Group V.,

Zone 3, East Lancs. Area, Home Guard."

A little story shows Nichols's spirit as a junior reporter. At a civic luncheon the reporters were placed a long way from the top table. Nichols led in a protest, but there was no time to alter the arrangements. After lunch frantic flunkeys appealed to them to take the seats which should have been theirs if they were to hear the speeches. Officials, and then the Mayor himself, sent down a request, but the pressmen stuck to their lowly seats, declaring that they were as good for hearing as for eating. Not a word of the speeches reached their ears or their papers. In Union assemblies Nichols displays his power of clear, concise reasoning, and his capacity for unravelling knotty questions. When legal matters have been involved, such as the controversies about the Judicial Proceedings (Regulation of Reports) Act, the Official Secrets Acts, and the proposed State Register for journalists, his early studies in law qualified him to give valued advice and guidance. In the Manchester area he launched the wages register, and the campaign for lapsing non-payers in 1921. He was secretary and chairman of the Northern Council, and in his own office he was father of the N.U.J. Chapel. When serious business was over, his social gifts were freely used for the enjoyment of Union gatherings.

In June, 1927, the Council of the Institute informed the Union Executive that they would welcome the appointment of a joint committee " to explore the possibility of forming one organisation of journalists." The N.E.C. appointed a committee to meet the Institute and stated that they regarded it as an indispensable condition of taking part in a joint meeting that a short-hand note of the discussions should be taken, and a transcript prepared for reference purposes, so that no subsequent misconception might arise. This was a very proper request after the former experience. The conference duly assembled and held three meetings on October 15 and Nov. 19, 1927, and on March 24, 1928. The transcript of the shorthand notes, running to 190 foolscap folio pages, is in my possession, and I must put a summary on record. The representatives at the first meeting were: Institute—Messrs. C. Igglesden (President, who received the honour of knighthood before the negotiations ended), A. P. Robbins, H. A. Taylor, B. Weller and R. V. Walling (secretary); N.U.J.—H. A. Raybould (President), T. Foster, T. Dickson, H. D. Nichols, W. Meakin, H. Martin and H. M. Richardson (general secretary). At subsequent meetings there were added: Institute—Mr. A. D.

Steene Catling, Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld (the new President), and Mr. H. W. Dawson; N.U.J.—F. W. Bill (vice-president), and W. G. Mitchell.

The work of the initial meeting was entirely an exploration of the ground and a clarification of the issues. Fundamental differences between the two bodies, both in conception and in operation, were clearly brought out and fully discussed. The Union, while not ignoring the importance of professional interests, affirmed that the economic interests of the working journalist as an employee were far more important. The policy of collaboration with other unions in the newspaper industry had produced valuable results, and the advantages greatly outweighed the disadvantages. The work the Union had accomplished in its 20 years of existence would have been impossible under the hampering limits of the Institute Charter, by which the Institute was amenable to the full common law, whereas the N.U.J. as a trade union was protected by the special legislation which gave unions exemption from a great part of the common law. Only a trade union could belong to the Joint Industrial Council, which did a great amount of conciliation and welfare work. There was discussion about the right to call a strike. Clearly the Union had it, but it was claimed that the Institute had not. It was stated that the Institute Council was then about to consider the taking of powers to call a strike, but the reply was that this was not possible under the general terms of the Charter and in the absence of any specific warrant in that document. Strong Institute feeling against affiliation to the P & K.T.F. was disclosed and a good deal of talk centred round the demand for a guarantee that if and when a fused body came into existence there should be a ballot of the whole membership on the question of its continuance or otherwise.

The Union representatives suffered a handicap in their advocacy of affiliation and the right to strike from the abnormal effects of the General Strike of 1926, but they kept the discussion on the plane of permanent principle. One Institute question was whether the Union placed loyalty to the P. & K.T.F. higher than loyalty to the employer; this was based on the feeling "that journalists as a whole were humiliated by the General Strike and subsequent proceedings." The reply was that the Union had improved and consolidated its position very greatly through its affiliation to the Federation, and during the General Strike felt itself under a moral obligation to fellow workers to advise its members that, whilst they were not to strike themselves, they

were not to blackleg. Loyalty was reciprocal. If the worker was loyal to his employer, so should the employer be loyal to the man he employed. A bit of secret history was revealed. In some offices in London where Union members disobeyed the instructions of their Executive and even did work outside their own sphere, such as setting type, " within a few months of that display of loyalty on the part of our members, they were dismissed on the ground that owing to reorganisation they were no longer required. That happened in three offices where those men had continued at work during the General Strike." This question of rival loyalties caused quite a lively discussion. One of the Union representatives at the meeting, who proclaimed his opposition to affiliation, said that the section in the Union who adopted that attitude, desired to have a loyalty only to the N.U.J., and not to a trade union or Labour movement. The extreme Institute standpoint was put thus : " The Institute is now asked to surrender its Charter and to surrender the proprietors and the Union will discuss at some future date the question of affiliation." So the discussion swayed on, until one Institute man, admitting the difficulties in the way of complete fusion, suggested off his own bat a scheme of journalistic " affiliation " ; briefly, a policy of fusion between the Union and the working journalists of the Institute embodied in its Economic Section, into a body under a new name which should affiliate to the Institute, which should retain its Charter and cease to function in all matters of wages, hours and working conditions. Seeing that this scheme was an individual product and had not been considered by the Institute representatives as a whole, the meeting decided to adjourn to enable them to consider the matter and bring forward constructive proposals.

When the second meeting was held on November 19 the Institute said they had reached the conclusion that the Charter was apparently an insurmountable obstacle in the view of the Union to complete amalgamation, and that there would have to be voluntary abandonment of the Charter. Therefore they were now seeing whether it was possible to establish good relations along another road—the establishment of an economic organisation of working journalists, which would be linked up to the other body established with a Charter. All the implications of the new situation thus created were carefully considered and ultimately on the proposal of the Institute President (Mr. Igglesden) seconded by the Union President (H. A. Raybould),

the following formula drawn up by Richardson was unanimously adopted, after much polishing up in word and phrase:

This preliminary conference of representatives of the Institute and the N.U.J. recommends that the Council and Executive of the two bodies be asked to set up a joint negotiating committee to draft a scheme which shall be submitted to the full membership of both bodies. The terms of reference to the joint committee to be as follows:

To consider a scheme for the delimitation of the respective functions of the Institute and the N.U.J. on the following basis: (a) The one organisation, the N.U.J., to provide effective machinery to deal with all matters relating to wages, hours, working conditions and employment, its membership to be confined to journalists who cannot exercise the powers of an employer. (b) The other organisation, the Institute, to continue to operate as a chartered body for professional purposes, but not to operate in matters relating to hours, wages and working conditions of those journalists eligible for membership of the N.U.J. (c) So far as possible under the rules of the respective organisations, their memberships to be identical. (d) This committee considers that should a scheme on the above lines be adopted, the question of affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. should be referred to a ballot of the augmented N.U.J.

When the Union N.E.C. met on Dec. 17 it was reported that the above basis had been accepted by the Council of the Institute. The N.E.C. took the same course and authorised its representatives to proceed to agree to a scheme which could be submitted to the full Committee and the A.D.M. The way was now clear for some spade work, and at a meeting of the conference on Jan. 21 two sub-committees were appointed to deal with the drafting of a detailed scheme, and with financial adjustments. In amplification of the formula the conference suggested the appropriate distribution of the administration of the various benefits by the two bodies in harmony with the functions assigned to them. It was agreed that every member of the Institute who was eligible for membership of the Union should be a member of the Union; and that every member of the Union eligible for membership of the Institute should be a member of the Institute. The Finance Sub-Committee made a thorough survey and came to the conclusion that if the great bulk of the 1,500 working journalist members of the Institute joined the Union it would be necessary for the Union, which would collect the contribution, to allocate about 12s. per head of the total membership to the Institute. Their conclusion was that the scheme would be of little value to working journalists aiming at one big union, unless all the eligible members and new members of the Institute joined the Union. Detailed proposals for the allocation of the funds of the two bodies were made, and the Institute was to adopt economies which would enable the scheme to be based on a grant of 10s. 6d. *per capita*

by the Union. The *Journalist* and the *Journal* would be amalgamated. The scheme was to operate from Jan. 1, 1929. The next step was a reference to the standing counsel of both bodies. G. F. L. Bridgman (Union) advised that whereas there was nothing in the rules or constitution of the N.U.J. to prevent the Union operating the scheme, he doubted whether the Institute could do so without surrendering the Charter. Opinions to the same effect were given by Messrs. F. Hinde and W. Latey, hon. counsel to the Institute. Thereupon both bodies agreed to share the expense of taking the opinion of distinguished and independent counsel, Mr. Stuart Bevan, K.C. This opinion has historical value, and is therefore given here textually, except for certain case references :

It is clear that the Institute as a corporation by Charter cannot "pursue any other object than those specified in its charter." Also there is authority that if a corporation proposed to do anything which is outside those objects, and which therefore may result in the forfeiture of its Charter, it can be restrained by injunction. An examination of the stated objects of the Institute shows that most of the stated objects of the Union are excluded, and inasmuch as the latter objects were illegal when the Charter was granted, they cannot be taken as included in any of the general words used. The proposed scheme of arrangement, as stated in my instructions, seems to confine the operations of the Institute to matters strictly within the objects, leaving to the Union other matters which are outside these objects. So far there can be no possible objection to the scheme, but unless the scheme has a much wider operation than that there seems little advantage in it. I suppose that the expected advantages arise from the proposed " identity of membership," but I have no details as to what that means or how it would work. In my view the Institute would be going outside its objects if it made membership of the Union a condition to membership of the Institute, or if in consideration of the Union extending its benefits to members of the Institute, it agreed to contribute to its funds, either by allocating to the Union part of the subscription of members or otherwise, or if it entered into any arrangement which was in effect an amalgamation or partial amalgamation with the Union.

A Charter can be surrendered to the Crown, or a new Charter obtained which cancels the old Charter, but in my view neither of these operations would afford a practical method of dealing with the matter, if there is any substantial opposition to the scheme proposed. Neither could be carried out in the face of opposition from corporators, and those who opposed the scheme would equally oppose such a step ; further, there are probably members who, although not actively in opposition to the scheme proposed, would oppose a surrender of the Charter, if that was contemplated merely with the object of carrying out the scheme. It may be that the scheme formulated avoids the difficulties above pointed out, but without details I cannot say if it does so. If it does not, possibly a scheme can be formulated which, while it secures a substantial part of the advantages arrived at, is not open to objection. But the objections indicated are fundamental, and cannot be cured by an alteration of the bye-laws, nor in my view would a surrender of the Charter be either a practical or desirable method of dealing with any difficulty which arises.

This was the impasse in which the Joint Committee met on March 24, 1928, and there was a great exercise of wits to discover

a way of escape. It was unavailing, and in the end the formula which had been produced by so much strenuous work on both sides had to receive the pathetic label, stillborn. The gist of the meeting—the last formal and official conference of the two bodies—must be recorded to complete the account. Mr. Blumenfeld, President of the Institute, was the chief spokesman for his side. While admitting that Mr. Bevan's drastic opinion made it very difficult to go on, they were still anxious to find a solution, within the anchorage of the Charter, which to them was fundamental. They were anxious to avoid guerrilla warfare in future. He put his hope into a striking phrase—that if the parties could not be married they might live together. The Union representatives defined their attitude in the following statement:

We shall be prepared to consider any solution of the difficulty which you may at any time suggest; but the difficulty is one that is inherent in the Charter, and therefore is one which we cannot remove, or even help to remove. If you can find a way round that difficulty we will seriously consider following you. We regret, as much as you do that the application of the scheme, upon the draft of which we unanimously agreed, is not possible. You and we have agreed to do certain things that in both our views are desirable in the interests of working journalists. Now we find that it cannot be made effective because of the barrier raised by the Charter. We regret it and you regret it. It seems to us that counsel's opinion leaves no hope of escape, but if you can indicate a way of escape, please do so—whether you do it by junior counsel drafting another opinion is for you to decide; we have little faith in it. In our opinion a position has arisen which must be reported to our respective members. Mr. Blumenfeld spoke of the renewal of rivalries. Such may be inevitable, but it may be possible to mitigate that by giving our respective members a clear statement of the negotiations and of the reason why we feel that at the moment it is impossible to make any further progress. In view of the fact that the obstacle is created by the constitution of the Institute, any question of future relations must be a matter for the Institute itself.

The Institute representatives presented the appended reply:—

The Institute members of the Committee do not think that the Charter is the inherent difficulty that precluded co-operation. It must not be assumed that the Charter prohibits the Institute from doing all the things that the Union is able to do, with one possible exception, that is the calling of a strike, which, in the present state of industrial relationship, may be regarded as a weapon of dubious utility. Attention is called to the paragraph in counsel's opinion in which he states that inasmuch as certain objects of the Union were illegal when the Charter was granted, these objects are now stated to be legal, and consequently there is the possibility, if necessary, of altering the Charter to bring it into line, as far as necessary, with more recent legislation. Our powers at present under the Charter are really sufficient to cover all points. We disagree with the suggestion that there is no avenue of escape. On the contrary, the Charter is in many respects a source of strength. The Institute has followed its Charter in these respects: "The promotion of whatever may tend to the elevation of the status and the improvement of the qualifications of all members of the journalistic profession; securing the advancement of journalism in all its branches and obtaining for journalists as such formal and definite professional standing; the promotion by all reasonable means of the interests of journalists and journalism." The object of

these negotiations was to find a means of co-operation between the two societies. We, on our part, do not hold that there are no avenues open for reaching the ends for which we set out. The Committee will recommend a further resort to counsel to make it clear that the Charter does entitle the Institute to do all the things which it has sought to do, as indicated above. Whatever the outcome of these negotiations may be, the spirit which has been exhibited demonstrates that there is opportunity for agreement on most of the points which have hitherto been in controversy. Our Committee believes that we are offered an advantageous moment for full co-operation.

Immediately on the reading of this statement Richardson asked: "When you say that the Charter does not prevent the Institute doing things that the Union is able to do, does not the Charter, as a matter of fact, prevent you entering into a working arrangement with the Union?" The Institute Secretary replied: "I think that is a point upon which we still desire to have a further opinion of counsel. The matter is rather left open." Mr. Blumenfeld added: "We do not agree with the opinion." H. D. Nichols spoke of an extraordinary misunderstanding involved in the Institute statement. According to it the paragraph in the opinion specially mentioned meant that the objects of the Union which were illegal when the Charter was granted were now legal. He pointed out that the passage in the opinion, stating that as the objects of the Union were illegal when the Charter was granted they could not be taken as included in any of the general words used, referred to the general words used in the Charter to define the objects of the Institute, and meant that the objects of the Union could not now be taken to be included in the permissible objects of the Institute. The discussion that followed bristled with debating points, which it is not possible to cover here. The verbatim report is in existence for any reference that may be required hereafter. The meeting agreed with one dissentient (an Institute member) on the issue of the following statement:

The negotiating Committee of the Institute and the N.U.J. regret to announce that their earnest efforts to arrive at an agreement for mutual membership and the delimitation of their respective functions have for the moment failed. Negotiations were carried on in the most amicable spirit. Draft agreements had been reached. The Union was to be the body to deal with all questions of salaries, conditions of employment, and payment of unemployment benefit. The Institute was to concern itself with professional questions, and education, and to administer benevolent funds. When agreement had been tentatively arrived at, the Institute's honorary legal advisers stated that the scheme would be impossible under the terms of the Institute Charter. It was agreed to submit the whole of the facts to Mr. Stuart Bevan, K.C., for his opinion. On March 23, Mr. Bevan sent his opinion, which was to the effect that the Charter of the Institute would not permit of such a scheme, or any scheme of amalgamation or partial amalgamation. On March 24 a further meeting of the Joint Committee was held. In view of counsel's

opinion, it was decided to adjourn the meeting *sine die*, in the hope that an alternative scheme might be formulated for consideration.

One or two important questions of policy, from the Union point of view, must be mentioned before closing this account of the final joint meeting. Mr. Blumenfeld made a strong appeal for some form of co-operation between the two organisations, and to this Richardson made a candid reply, the sense of which may be stated thus: "The Union must be very careful in this matter. We must have a body which will have strength enough to have a considerable say on the conditions under which journalists have to work. Supposing we enter into some undertaking with you for a working arrangement. People who do not look with favour on trade unionism, but prefer a chartered professional body, would ask why they should join a trade union, which admittedly had won valuable agreements for the betterment of wages, conditions, etc., when, by remaining in the Institute they could have all the advantages gained by the Union. The result would be a numerical strengthening of the Institute and a corresponding numerical weakening of the Union. In time the Union would become less able to fight for the protection of the working journalist, and the Institute would be stronger in numbers but still limited by its Charter. and unable to fight for the interest of its members." A condition on which the Union insisted was the identity of membership of both bodies, as far as employed journalists were concerned. Thus the Union in its economic work would have a 100 per cent. membership of the men concerned. The Institute would look after professional interests, education and benevolent benefits and would find a place in it for managers and others not eligible for membership of the Union. There would be one collection of a single contribution by the Union and an agreed allocation of money to the Institute. That balanced scheme was approved, though some Institute men fought for a long time to get contracting-out conceded for men who did not want to join the Union. The reply of the Union was that the solid adherence of all the working journalists was essential.

The proceedings of the Joint Conference were very fully reported to the A.D.M. in London in April, 1928, which marked the coming-of-age of the Union, and the resolution carried with only one or two dissentients, was in these terms: "This A.D.M. accepts the report of the General Secretary on the negotiations with the Institute; expresses regret that owing to the limitations

imposed by the Institute Charter, which were made clear in successive opinions of counsel, it appeared to be impossible, as the Institute representatives agreed, to give effect to the provisional agreement unanimously arrived at; and declares the willingness of the Union to consider any proposals which the Institute may be able to put forward as a means of overcoming the obstacle in the way of the operation of the provisional agreement." The Council of the Institute decided unanimously in May to inform the N.U.J. that it was prepared to consider "the appointment of a standing joint consultative committee of the two organisations, with a view to the discussion and consideration of all matters affecting the interests of the two bodies." Richardson's reply was:

My Council appreciates the willingness of the Institute to consider the appointment of a Standing Joint Committee of the two organisations. My Council feels, however, that the working journalists of the country might be placed in a false position if there was such a joint committee representative of two bodies with powers, constitutions, and rules so dissimilar as those of the Institute and the Union. It is difficult to foresee any matter arising in which the working journalists would not be stronger if they spoke with one voice, and that the voice of the body which is alone legally capable of giving effect to their desires. As was made clear at the meetings of the Negotiating Committee, the power of the Institute is very restricted. Indeed, it was admitted by your representatives that your Economic Section had no powers other than those that are inherent in the individual himself—that is, the power of suggestion—and it was for the purpose of giving that Economic Section the greater powers that pertain to individuals when united on a trade-union basis, that your Negotiating Committee put forward the suggestion that the Union's functions and the Institute's functions should be defined, and that all the members of your Economic Section should become members of the Union. On the questions that most closely affect the welfare of working journalists, salaries and conditions of employment, the Institute is admittedly unable to take or direct any decisive action, and in our view it would be detrimental to their interests to permit them to be in doubt as to where lies the responsibility for their well-being. Any common action between the two bodies on such questions seems to us to be dangerous, if not impossible. If benefits accrued through trade union action, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to declare (what would be the truth) that the credit belongs entirely to the Union. If, on the other hand, trade union action led to any evil consequences, it would be impossible and dishonest of the Union to declare that the Institute was equally blameworthy.

We think it better from all points of view that our respective present and potential members should understand the position as it is; that the Institute should continue as a body capable of dealing with questions covered by, and in the manner laid down in, the Charter, while the Union continues to deal with questions in the way permitted by the Trade Union Acts. For those reasons we do not think it advisable to establish a Standing Joint Consultative Committee. At the same time I am directed to say that should the Institute ever desire to act jointly with us on any question other than those relating to salaries and conditions, in which it may not act effectively, we shall be glad to hear from you. There may be such possibilities in the future. and we should deeply deplore any decision being taken, which might affect the whole profession, if our participation in such decision might be advantageous to

the profession. We deeply regret that we are unable to accept your implied invitation to form a Standing Joint Committee, just as we deeply regret that the negotiations to form one big organisation of journalists have broken down. For that breakdown the legal disabilities imposed by the Institute Charter were solely responsible. The responsibility for not forming a Standing Joint Committee must rest on us, and we must accept it, believing that such a refusal is in the best interests not merely of the Union, but of working journalists as a whole, and of the Institute.

The reference to the possibility of joint action in this letter furnishes a noteworthy contrast to the "no co-operation" decision of 1917, when Central London tried unsuccessfully to confine the ban to questions affecting wages and working conditions. Since the unavailing negotiations of 1927-1928 there has been less altercation in the open between the two bodies, though the ground which was so thoroughly tilled at that time was full of the seeds of discord, and time has naturally produced some crops of statement and mis-statement, protest and complaint. Two instances alone must suffice to complete this survey of Institute-Union relations. One is an incisive criticism of Institute tactics by the General Secretary (C. J. Bundock) in 1937, headed "The Cuckoo in the Nest." The Institute Conference had decided that as all agreements governing wages, working conditions, and holidays were applicable to all working journalists, including members of the Institute, the time had arrived when the Institute should be recognised as a party and signatory to those or parallel agreements, and to achieve that end the Council or Economic Section approach employers' organisations. Describing the Institute as the cuckoo of journalism, "the bird which lays its eggs in nests which have been built by the industry of other birds," Bundock exclaimed: "As a piece of staggering impudence that resolution would be hard to beat." Having supported his case with an array of hard facts he quoted a speech at the Institute meeting at Margate and concluded: "Mr. Peaker properly summed up the situation when he said, 'At Margate 13 years ago we entered the Kingdom of Heaven, and we have remained there ever since.' One day, perhaps, they will come down to earth!" Hamilton Fyfe wrote to congratulate the Union on having a hard hitter in its new General Secretary: "his article on Institute impudence was a tonic refresher."

In the autumn of 1939 the Institute suggested the co-operation of the Union in a special committee, "to investigate the causes of unemployment and insecurity in the journalistic profession, and to put forward practical proposals for dealing with this difficult problem." The Union Executive gave a firm and

businesslike answer. The problem was susceptible to solution only by trade union principles and methods, and the Institute could not function as a trade union. The regulation of recruitment was inseparably connected with the problem of unemployment. The Union had an agreement laying down the proportion of juniors to seniors in an office, but there were gaps in the application of it. It would be helpful if Institute members who were employers, and belonged to the Newspaper Society who made the agreement, would strictly apply it in their offices. The Union Executive was convinced that only a strong vigilant trade union spirit animating all journalists could adequately cope with the problem of unemployment, and therefore that participation in the Institute Committee could add nothing to Union knowledge of the problem and little to its practical solution.

POSTSCRIPT.—At the time of writing (August, 1943), we are confronted with a remarkable development. The Institute has secured recognition from the N.P.A., which has authorised the making of an agreement with the Institute " on the lines of that already in existence with the N.U.J." A similar concession is being sought by the Institute from the Newspaper Society. The Institute also approached the P. & K.T.F. with a view to affiliation, but the Federation refused. The Union N.E.C. at once announced its resolve " to resist to the utmost any recognition of the Institute as a negotiating body. Any such move would cause widespread unrest and create immediate difficulties in offices throughout the country." The action of the Institute is regarded as a threat to undermine the representative authority of the Union and to divide the forces of working journalists in their approaches to employers. The N.E.C. is laying its plans for the vindication of the position the Union has held for many years as the sole negotiating body on the conditions of employment of working journalists. A Special Delegate Meeting is being summoned and preparations are being made for what promises to be one of the biggest fights the Union has yet had to wage.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GREAT WAR—1914-18: HOW THE HOME FRONT WAS HELD.

THE outbreak of the Great War on August 4, 1914, found the Union busy about many things. Mars in his violent descent laid ruthless hands upon it all. Visions of peaceful progress vanished at that dread ultimatum; the salvage of a few hard-won gains was almost submerged in the national crisis. In July some branches had got to work on the preliminaries of the National Programme, and the plan was that by the autumn each area would provide a scheme of action for its own participation in the great betterment campaign. The Executive was in the happy position of being able to invest another thousand pounds in trustee securities. The desire for a superannuation fund was intensified by the increase of staff pension schemes in newspaper offices; notably by the rule adopted in one instance that members of a trade union could not share in the benefit. Leakage of confidential Union news caused disquiet, and the N.E.C. gave a reminder of the penalty of expulsion. Pegg and Perks had a lively interchange in the *Journal* on the proposal to increase the contribution rates. In London steps were being taken to organise press photographers; there were discussions on the knotty question of the best day and time for branch meetings; it was the height of the sub-committee season, and there were rosy visions of the amenities of a new headquarters office. The Eastern District Council was discussing the desirability of reducing the N.E.C., for the sake of economy and efficiency. The N.E.C. decided to issue the *Journal* monthly until a ballot was taken on the contribution question. Then Fate stepped in and there was no *Journal* for three months.

In finance the Union felt the first shock of the War. Income fell because of the many members (1) who enlisted in the Forces; (2) who lost their employment; (3) whose contributions had to be excused because of seriously reduced incomes. Expenditure was at the same time doubled by unemployment. By a war crisis levy of sixpence per member per week the N.E.C. planned to raise £50 per week. On the part of proprietors, in the scare of the opening period of the War, there was a wide resort to reduction

of staffs, but a calmer survey led to the withdrawal of many notices as time went on. The rush of loyal men to the colours spared the Union a real deluge of unemployment. Schemes were adopted of short time working at reduced pay and of duty in alternate weeks, on lower salaries. Many members, with a spirit of self-sacrificing patriotism, accepted salary cuts while in full work, realising that their papers were suffering a severe financial shock. Some indeed faced the gruelling task of maintaining homes on little more than £1 a week. This was, of course, before the days of the minimum wage. The Unemployment Bureau of the Union eased the situation as far as possible by endeavouring to get temporary work for members outside journalism. In London we tried to place men on the temporary staffs of the Admiralty, War Office, and other national departments, but the reply was that extra assistance required would be supplied in the ordinary way by the Civil Service Commissioners. Newspaper proprietors were heavily hit by the sudden cessation of advertising, but the conclusion cannot be gainsaid that many of them, as the chief partners in the industry with resources superior to those of their employees, might well have fought the tendency to panic and reflected that the position would become steadier and better.

For the time it was a dreary picture of lean sheets and lean staffs. Here and there we had to face not merely the reduction of staffs, but also an attempt to break the professional custom as to the period of notice. On the whole in the ranks the sense of comradeship survived a searching test, and staffs accepted all-round reductions of salary to save some members from dismissal. Linage was almost extinguished, and men who had accepted wage cuts because of linage prospects found themselves in a sorry plight. "Carry on" was the slogan, and there was a general feeling of solid satisfaction that the crisis found the Union not merely able to meet its liabilities, but to do substantially more. The spirit of fellowship and discipline displayed was encouraging. Many men struggling along on a bare pittance refrained from making any claim on Union funds. There were gleams of humour to light up the sombre scene. One among many early stories told against the press censorship was of a well-known correspondent who brought over from France one of his usual four-column week-end messages. There was time, so they had it set and proofs were sent to the War Office. Meanwhile a sub-editor was asked to prune the story and he cut out half of it as second-hand or use-

less. When the proofs came back from the censor it was found that he had blue-pencilled the other half. The thrilling story of another writer was so severely handled by the censor that nothing was left but the phrase "I speeded up my Rolls Royce," nine times. Mention of censorship calls up the most famous, or should one say notorious, example of official concealment. On November 13, 1918, the Lords of the Admiralty announced through the Press Bureau that "H.M.S. *Audacious* sank after striking a mine off the North Irish Coast on 27th October, 1914." There was much sarcasm and merriment over this classic instance of, as many called it, the absurdity of the censorship, but Sir Edward Cook has made out a very fair case for the Official Press Bureau, of which he and Sir Frank Swettenham were the Directors for a long period. Once we had to meet them on some question of procedure, and found them quite creditably receptive and open-minded for a Whitehall "control."

The *Journal* made a second jump, this time of four months. By February, 1915, it was necessary to tell members how the Union stood, so the President (F. E. Hamer) published a re-assuring message. "The crisis has not wrecked the Union. On the contrary it has supplied the most convincing testimony to its strength on two essential points—the economic soundness of the constitution laid down by the founders, and the splendid spirit of loyalty and comradeship which has already grown up among the members." The N.E.C. asked branches to report the precise effects of the war on their local conditions, as most of them had then but the vaguest idea of what had actually happened outside their own areas. W. N. Watts quoted a score of tributes from grateful members to the Union for timely help given in many ways. He wrote the following paragraph, which must be quoted now, when I am fulfilling his prediction 28 years after it was made: "Some day there will be written a history of the early life of the Union. I am convinced that one of the most interesting chapters will be that in which the historian deals with the way in which the present war crisis was met . . . The magnificent loyalty of the members has eased our burdens, and with a continuance of this fine spirit there is reason to believe that when the war is over, the Union will be in the almost unique position of having from start to finish discharged more than its obligations to members." An aspiration worthy of Watts, and who shall say it was not fulfilled? His voice from Manchester awoke the appropriate echo from "Lancastrian" in the South: "Brighter

outlook of darkened London." After six months of war it was seen that the levy had saved the financial position. It was a real triumph to find that the income from the levy bade fair to exceed the income from ordinary contributions. In March the weekly levy was reduced from sixpence to threepence.

On Good Friday, 1915, the A.D.M. at Sheffield sent a telegram to the King, opening thus : " The National Union of Journalists, 400 of whose members are now serving with the Imperial Forces, and which rejoices to have been able to stimulate recruiting throughout the country, desires to send to your Majesty a loyal message of greeting." The reply congratulated the Union on its large contingent of recruits. A greeting was also sent to journalist colleagues of the Allied Nations, the leading paragraph of which noted with satisfaction " the growing friendship and good understanding between the Russian and British Empires." For the first time there was a reduction of membership—3,232 at the end of 1914, against 3,407 the year before. It was reported that with the exception of the picture papers and perhaps one or two others, every paper in the country was suffering from the war. The circulations of the picture papers had gone up enormously, and they were the only papers able to ask full scale rates for their advertisements, and probably a bit more. On paper and ink big economies had been made. By cutting off six square inches of a sheet on a circulation of 100,000, nearly £1,000 a year was saved. These were the real ways to economise, said Lethem in his review as treasurer, and editors and proprietors who started to trim shillings off reporters' wages did not know their business. It was decided to call for the restoration of war wage cuts, and to claim an increase on salaries within the Insurance limit (£160 a year).

To depart for a moment from the economic line, the Birmingham Branch had an interesting discussion on the influence of the war on newspapers and newspaper men, under the competent guidance of men like J. B. Hobman, W. A. Willson, and C. Billyeald, the last one of the Manchester group of founders. The decorative display of news, created by the invasion of the provinces by the London papers, had been accelerated by the war. The penny papers had copied the livelier half-pennies in splash heads and hanging indent introductions defined by Hobman as " a curious compound of strategical explanation and leading article." This meant more work for the sub-editors, and the experience was that the war had increased the work of that department more than

any other. The liberation of the popular papers from the tyranny of "mathematical window-dressing," and the brightening of the more sober penny papers, were accepted as welcome tendencies. The veneer of optimism in some sub-editorial quarters was exposed. Some ignored the enemy's claims (not always false), and recorded enough "progress of the Allies" to have carried them right through Germany, and so many "German losses" that it was a wonder any Teutons were left. But happily these journalists were getting a truer perspective, partly because the public had become less gullible. As there were still big things to come sub-editors were advised to be more careful with their stock of superlatives.

As 1915 wore on the Union got down to its proper problems—the establishment of minimum wage scales, the scientific revision of branch areas, the keeping of branch accounts, propaganda in Scotland, executive reform, the joining of Trade Councils, etc. Pages in the *Journal* were devoted to "Comrades in Khaki," "Military Pressmen," letters from soldier members and then inevitably came "Our fallen comrades." In October it was found possible to suspend the compulsory levy, and members of the Executive in various areas got busy interviewing employers to secure restoration of wages to former levels, and even increases where at all feasible. In some cases restitution was made voluntarily by proprietors. One incident during a visit by Watts and Meakin to a City in the West calls for record. The owner of the paper was an alderman and he greeted the visitors with the remark: "I don't like you trade union people. You come here interfering with my business." Watts (affably): "Well Sir, that sounds strange to us, considering the fact that our trade union is subsidising your business." The Alderman: "Subsidising my business! What do you mean?" Watts (always the gentleman): "Well simply this, sir. Here you have a young man on your paper who was receiving the poor wage of 30s. a week. On that wage he was just able to keep himself and his widowed mother. You cut down his pay to 20s. On that small sum he cannot live. So we, his trade union, have stepped in to pay him the 10s. you took from him. That makes it possible for him to live and to continue working for you at the low rate you are paying him. We are subsidising your business, Sir." The Alderman (in friendly subdued tones after a moment's silence): "I had not looked at it in that light. What do you suggest I should do?" Watts and

Meakin gave the practical reply, and to his credit be it said, the Alderman restored the cut.

There were county court actions in other places, in which it was decided that acceptance of reductions in wages did not necessarily vary the original contract of service; and that reductions accepted conditionally on the employer suffering from the war were recoverable where that contingency failed to arise. J. H. Harley and J. E. Brown did a good stroke of Union business in an interview with the proprietor of a paper in the South of England employing a large staff. Amendments were obtained of objectionable clauses in agreements, and other concessions, and the proprietor admitted that by force of circumstances he had been compelled to raise his rates of salary. By a firm front in other cases the undertaking was procured that when profit-making returned the first change would be the restitution of former wage rates, and (an important point) the security of members who had pressed for improvements was safeguarded.

There was novelty in a successful piece of work in the autumn of 1915. The time honoured charges for Press telegrams (day rate 1s. per 75 words, night 1s. per 100 words, plus twopence for each additional address to which the message was duplicated) were in danger. In the House of Commons there had been occasional protests against the loss to the Exchequer involved in the grant of cheap rates to the newspapers. It was officially stated that this loss was about £200,000 per annum. Nothing was, however, done about it until War, the fruitful parent of unwelcome innovation, directed the attention of the Treasury to this matter as a possible source of extra revenue. The Government proposed to make big increases in the charges—2s. 6d. instead of 1s. per 75, day, and 2s. 6d. instead of 1s. per 100, night, with 8d. extra, instead of 2d., for each additional address. A deputation of newspaper and news agency proprietors to the Postmaster General (Mr. Herbert, now Viscount, Samuel) failed to deflect the official purpose. The reply was that the papers were wealthy and could afford to pay more for their telegraphic facilities; and moreover it was held to be quite wrong to grant what was in effect a subsidy to the Press by giving lower rates than those charged to the public. The Institute of Journalists adduced no new arguments.

Then the Union, acting in co-operation with the Press Association, Newspaper Proprietors' Association and Newspaper Society, put in an effective plea which changed the position. Watts and the President (Hamer), spokesmen for the N.U.J., argued a dis-

tinctively Union case for the men who earned a small and precarious living from linage. Often these men were working "on their own," had no retaining fee from paper or agency, and had to pay on the nail for news telegrams; and all this outlay was not recoverable unless the copy was used. It was recognised that London papers and the more important provincial ones, supplied their accredited correspondents with books of telegraph "passes," with which messages were franked and debited to the papers by the Post Office. But these passes were mainly used for long messages such as reports of big speeches and events, and much telegraphic work was prepaid by the senders. To increase the cost to men whose livelihood was already in peril would be a grave hardship; not on "wealthy" papers, but on the struggling reporters who found the news. Mr. Samuel admitted that this was a new point not hitherto brought to his notice, which called for consideration, and he thanked Watts for putting it. The deputation strongly urged the retention of the one shilling unit of charge. The higher rates above mentioned were due to come into operation on November 1, 1915, and it was calculated that they would wipe out the alleged loss of £200,000 per annum.

The representations of the deputation from the P.A., the N.P.A., the N.S., and the N.U.J., fortunately procured a large reduction in the increases, which became law on October 28, 1915, as follows:—Day rate (9 a.m. to 6 p.m.) 1s. per 60 words (instead of 75) plus 3d. (instead of 2d.) for each additional address; night rate (6 p.m. to 9 a.m.) 1s. per 80 words (instead of 100) plus 3d. (instead of 2d.) for each additional address. The official calculation was that the above increases, due to start on January 1, 1916, would reduce the annual loss of £200,000 by £60,000. If this is sound the agencies and papers saved a big yearly sum by reductions secured as a result of this novel co-operative effort between the Union and the proprietors. The Parliamentary Branch, through its chairman, W. Veitch, was of particular value in this matter. The proprietors welcomed the help of the Union, and a graceful tribute from the South Wales Branch spoke of the "statesmanlike" skill of the Executive's intervention. As the result of further representations to the Postmaster General the operation of the revised increased rates was postponed until January 1, 1917, then to January 1, 1918, and finally to January 1, 1920. The present War has caused a further increase to 1s. 3d. per 60 words day and 80 night, dating from June, 1940. In the intervening 20 years the saving to the Press by the original concessions won

must have mounted to a huge total and the Union has scarcely been given the full credit it deserves for its intervention in 1915.

The Union Executive pursued the policy of trying to secure the retention in their civil occupations of the journalists necessary to the continuance of newspapers as essential to the public interest. The great bulk of members were in agreement therewith, but there were two extreme views, deserving of notice, in spite of the fewness of their holders, because of their singularity. C. F. Tuckett, of the Parliamentary Branch, who had given the Union fine service at Sheffield and in Central London and the Gallery, resigned his membership because he disapproved of the efforts to get journalists exempted from service. He thought all should be open to recruitment, and himself enlisted under the Derby scheme as a private, rather than apply for a commission. In March, 1918, he was killed in action, and many old Union friends mourned the loss of a gallant soldier and a valued colleague. They were glad to learn that a few days before he fell he wrote asking for re-admission to the Union, and the Branch was intending to welcome his return almost on the day when the news of his death came. At the other extreme of opinion was a small knot of conscientious objectors. The N.E.C. asked branches to remit to the Emergency Committee cases of members being thrown out of employment, owing to conscientious objection to military service, such cases " to be dealt with on their merits." Glasgow sent in the opinion that no member who, because of a *bona fide* objection to military service, refused service under the Act, should be deprived of any privileges or benefits of the Union. The view of the Executive was " that a man would not be deprived, owing to his conscience, of any benefit to which he was entitled from the Union." A conscientious objector engaged on secretarial work in connection with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, inquired about his position in the Union, and was informed that for the time being he was entitled to membership.

Attention was called to the case of Hubert W. Peet, a good Union member and a Quaker, who was suffering imprisonment, with hard labour, because of conscience ; there were strong views on the severity of the sentence. In September Leonard Crisp, formerly secretary of the Berks. and Oxon. Branch, and a branch secretary to-day, wrote from Wakefield Prison, stating that he had never failed to convince tribunals of the sincerity of his conscientious objections, but his claim to absolute exemption which alone would meet his case, had been rejected, and he had been

sentenced four times by military courts martial for upholding that claim. He said that he had been a prisoner continuously for more than two years, and asserted that this was in direct contravention of the Army Act. Two members in the Army, one a sergeant and the other a lieutenant, curtly replied that Crisp ought to resign from the Union, failing which "his name and the names of all others of that ilk, should be obliterated for all time from the roll of the N.U.J." Other correspondents showed a more tolerant spirit, though not conscientious objectors themselves. One exclaimed, "To Mr. Crisp I take off my hat." The Union could not take any action, it was said, but at least sympathy could be shown to any member who was being victimised.

Complaint was made of the "truly shocking" treatment of objectors, and the doctrine laid down "that respect to the individual conscience is one of the standards whereby we judge the stage of civilisation reached by a community." A very different prompting of conscience was forthcoming from a Central London member who was serving as a lieutenant in India. He sent a bankers' draft for £2 16s. being two years' contributions to the Union, with a letter expressing gratitude for the generosity of members at home who were shouldering the financial burden for their brethren in the field, and saying that those on service who had no pressing calls should continue their contributions, since they were the people most likely to require the assistance of the Union after the war. An officer in the R.G.A., who was an original member and first secretary of a big northern branch, seconded the proposition by sending his cheque for £2 16s. to the treasurer of Central London.

Allusion has been made to the Derby Scheme. For the benefit of readers whose memories do not carry them back so far it may be recalled that when the system of voluntary enrolment for the Forces gave signs of failure in the autumn of 1915 Lord Derby was appointed Director of Recruiting and got to work on the main features of his plan, which was a personal canvass of every man in the Kingdom between the ages of 18 and 41, carried out on the basis of the National Register. Each was asked to attest, *i.e.*, to pledge himself to join up when called for, subject to the undertaking that no married men would be taken until all the single men had been summoned. The scheme was a failure. It provided only 343,386 out of the total of single unenlisted men of 2,179,231 in the country. A large number of Union members attested. In January, 1916, the first definite measure of conscription was

passed and in May came the Act which imposed general and immediate compulsory military service. At that time the total of attested married men not called up and of attested single men retained in "starred" (reserved) occupations, was 697,000. The new situation meant arduous work for Union leaders. However sensitive they might be on the rights of conscience they were literally unable to deflect their energies from the problems that pressed on them. While conscription was on the way Watts kept branches informed of all matters arising by long and detailed circular letters. In May, 1916, a list of "certified occupations" was issued, meaning of course work of national importance. This list contained the following:

Daily Newspapers: Editorial Staff—men to be exempted to whose exemption the military representative agrees after consultation with one of the following federations of newspaper proprietors: Newspaper Proprietors' Association (London), Federation of Northern Newspaper Owners, Federation of Southern Newspaper Owners, or the Scottish Daily Newspaper Society, according to the district in which the head office of the newspaper concerned is situated.

The benefit of reservation was confined to daily newspapers, but in the case of a man on a weekly paper an application could be lodged on the ground "that it is expedient in the national interests that the man should, instead of being employed in military service, be engaged in other work in which he is habitually engaged." There were all sorts of complications as to married and single men, attestees and non-attestees. Reservation could not be granted by the local Appeal Tribunals unless the proprietors issued the necessary certificate, and it was accepted by the military representative. Owing to the need of men the military prosecuted a vigorous "comb-out," and many a fierce battle was fought over the body of a peace-loving scribe. One of the many cases which figure in Executive minutes was that of the chief sub-editor of the *North Star*, who was ordered for service by the Darlington Military Tribunal. At the request of the Union the chairman of the Reserved Occupations Committee communicated with the War Office, and soon the editor of the paper informed us that the County Tribunal at Durham had given the chief sub. exemption while he remained in the post he then held. The Emergency Committee minutes for May 9, 1916, contain this entry:

Mr. George E. Leach, standing counsel, attended and conferred with the committee in reference to the position of members of the Union in view of the new Military Service Bill. It was decided to send to Branch Secretaries a circular embodying the views expressed by Mr. Leach, and, when the Act is passed and the regulations under it are available, to issue a circular to members.

In reference to this matter Mr. T. Foster, secretary to Central London Branch, followed up a telegram with a letter in which he said: "We thought you would not object to a suggestion that vigilance should be exercised at once. Mansfield, Thorogood and I were asked to help, and it was suggested that Veitch should be asked to join in the Great Council of Wise Men." This was preceded by the statement: "The view of our Branch is that the new Act will make huge demands on our members, and as there may be no prospect of securing extension of reservation, even if a movement for it were regarded as desirable, a possible way out is to see that journalists, who are hardly likely to be wanted immediately for military service, are drafted into the Civil Reserve and retained in the work they are most competent to perform—journalism."

In regard to the last quoted paragraph Mr. Leach expressed the opinion that the clause referred to by Mr. Foster clearly affected only men who are already serving in the Army. It was agreed to fall in with the suggestion of a Vigilance Committee who should make recommendations to the Emergency Committee.

The word "vigilance" well suggests the position in Fleet Street at that time. Staffs were at the skeleton stage and the fate of key men hung on the ardour of the military and the attitude of the City Tribunal. There was need for constant attention if the papers were to maintain efficient production. The Union President was good enough to speak of us as "the alert two who are in a position to learn very quickly all Westminster developments, both before and behind the curtain." The foregoing minute is reproduced as illustrating the kind of work which was constantly falling on the Executive. The military mind is never credited with any fine sense of the rights of journalists, therefore it was re-assuring to learn that in the majority of provincial centres the military representatives were carrying out instructions to consult with the proprietors' federations, and that the recommendations of those bodies were generally being accepted. Employers had the right of appeal for the retention of men on the ground of indispensability apart from the general question of reservation. Neither the Union nor the journalist had any *locus standi* at the Tribunals. As to the exclusion of the weekly papers from reservation it was understood that the Board of Trade Committee held the opinion that local tribunals would be acquainted with the circumstances of the weeklies in their areas and be competent to deal with appeals for the exemption of journalists employed on them. An official ruling, of practical interest to us, was that local tribunals should hold their sittings in public. This meant work for reporters.

At the 1916 A.D.M. it was mentioned that the Institute had 124 members in the Forces and the Union 800;—not a bad indication of relative strength. There was a further decrease in Union membership, from 3,232 to 3,127. It was reported

that about 700 members joined the Army before the Derby Scheme, under which many members attested, the assurance being that men on morning and evening papers had been reserved, and that to get the benefit of reservation attestation was necessary. The N.E.C. regretted that they had not been able to take members fully into their confidence. They had endeavoured to see that faith was kept with members and that the authorities should not, in fact, conscript volunteers. The N.E.C. never attempted to keep men from joining the Army and the great number with the colours showed the readiness to answer the country's call.

Just before the Military Service Act came into force on June 24, 1916, full details were issued by the N.E.C. to all branches as to the proper procedure of members in the variety of contingencies which beset them. It is not necessary here to dive into all the points of those complications. After explaining existing rights as to reservation the circular was careful to add: "This statement is issued merely for the purpose of information and not, of course, with any idea of advising members as to the course they should take." Other questions were before the N.E.C. in the autumn of 1916, such as the deportation of a journalist, the military and press photographs, inadequate allowances for married soldiers' families, the new scale of war pensions, and the compilation of a Roll of Honour, which was efficiently undertaken by Jay, of Bristol. By the end of the year we were beginning to think of after-war problems, the re-instatement of our serving members in civilian life, and the conditions of the industry. Financial affairs had to be closely watched during the year, and in October, branches were warned: "With about 1,000 members with the colours our income is seriously reduced, and you will realise the importance of keeping a tight hand on the Union's finances." A record had to be kept of any arrears of contributions owing by individual members at the time of enlistment, but these were treated as items separate from ordinary arrears.

At the A.D.M. in 1919 the N.E.C. was instructed to authorise the remission of arrears of ex-service members where branches considered it necessary. By a series of coincidences there were fourteen Union contribution days in 1916, instead of the usual baker's dozen. How it happened was learnedly explained by "Lancastrian" (T. Foster) in the *Journal*. The article was amusing and lucid enough for the ordinary unmathematical

journalistic mind. In short, there were 14 contribution days (one every four weeks) in the year because the first day was a Saturday and a contribution Saturday, namely Jan. 1, the last being December 30. There were two contribution dates in January and in December. The writer supposed that it worked round this way in every 23 years. Curious enough to look it up I find that there were 14 four-weekly Saturdays in 1938, twenty two years later, starting Jan. 1, and ending Dec. 31. Was this phenomenon a financial advantage to the Union ? Possibly the gain on the swings involved a loss on the roundabouts—anyhow the writer referred this profound problem to the seer of Harehills-lane (Treasurer Lethem).

When the A.D.M. came round in April, 1917, the full effect of the excuse of service men's contributions was revealed in a substantial loss of income and a surplus of only £417. There were 1,027 members in the Forces. The strain was relieved somewhat by continued voluntary contributions. The compulsory levy in 1914 amounted to 6s. per member, and in 1915 to 12s. 6d. Then it ceased. The War Distress Fund began to take a part of the burden from the Union's shoulders. More money was placed in war loans ; the rates of interest 4½, 5 and 6 per cent., look big compared with the rates ruling in the present war. It fell to my lot at the conference to report on military and national service. The proprietorial associations had welcomed Union offers of co-operation, but the changing and uncertain situation had as yet given no opportunity of concerted intervention. Correspondence with Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Director-General of National Service, had failed to secure any assurances of value, but General Geddes, the Director of Recruiting, had informed the Newspaper Society that no instructions had been issued by him as to the pooling of newspapers, as stated by the military representative at Peterborough.

A War Office circular to recruiting officers, dated Jan. 5, 1917, relating to morning and evening papers, stated that the officers should bear in mind that daily newspapers were rendering important national service, and that staffs left should be sufficient to enable the papers to carry on with reasonable ease. The paper supply position was rather alarming and it had been pointed out to the Board of Trade that there was a danger of some newspapers being crushed out of existence because of their inability to secure raw material. Available statistics showed that generally newspapers were being staffed by men in the editorial depart-

ments who were mainly above military age, were medical rejects, or were in the lowest categories. If numbers of those men were thrown out of work by the inability of proprietors to get paper it would, the Union submitted, be a national misfortune and an injustice. Only a formal reply was received, but in Parliament the Government urged those who had stocks of paper to take such voluntary action as would prevent old-established newspapers in a less fortunate position from having to cease publication. I made it known that one great proprietor, before that appeal was made, rendered such assistance to many other papers. If my memory now serves me aright he was Lord Northcliffe.

An instance of official muddle-headedness was reported from Kent. A weekly paper reporter obtained a post on a staff in another district, and his employer went to the Labour Exchange for a new man. The manager of the Exchange told him that as the trade was a "restricted" one the reporter was not entitled to change his position and a new man could not be found. An inquiry at Union headquarters elicited the facts. The Restricted Occupations Order covered letterpress printing but not newspapers, so there was no restriction on the movements of journalists. Moreover, added Watts, a Labour Exchange was not yet a likely place to find a journalist. We in London were not too sure of the position, because a letter from the National Service Department told us that it had been "provisionally decided" that newspaper printing should not be covered by the Restricted Occupations Order, "newspapers being defined in the strict sense of papers containing news." The comment was added in the *Journal*: "The German Government recognises the importance of the Press so fully as to guarantee its man-power and supplies of material; in this particular our Government might take a leaf from the enemy's book."

One of the difficulties besetting the Union was the divergent methods adopted in different districts. No editorial man was treated as in a "certified occupation" if he was under 30 years of age on April 4, 1916, or if he was classed in categories A and B1. The age of reservation was raised on Feb. 1, 1917, and a further revision was expected soon after. Such was the uncertainty of the position. Was a reporter an "editorial" man? The answer varied in different districts, and an official ruling was sought for. Strong arguments were suggested to weekly paper men who tried to establish claims to exemption before the tribunals on grounds of the necessity of their work. The great

national campaigns—recruiting in the early days of the war, war loans, thrift, food economy, national service—had been signally served and promoted by the weekly papers up and down the country and those papers were highly appreciated by the "boys at the front," and the industry ought to be kept alive for our soldier members to return to after the war. Journalists claiming exemption from military service on the ground of being employed in a "certified occupation" could not escape military service by volunteering for national service. On the whole question of newspapers in relation to the State it was claimed that the Government should put into practice views expressed by leading statesmen and treat the Press comprehensively as a profession that was rendering vital national service by making clear and specific regulations for its due maintenance as an essential industry. To those versed in the ways of officialdom this may be regarded as a naïve posture. In reality we had to make the best of a confusing situation, deal with grievances as they arose, and accept concessions piecemeal. New instructions were issued soon after the above claim appeared in print. Newspapers being essential on public grounds sufficient men were to be kept in all departments to enable the daily papers to continue, provided that the possibility of increasing the number of men employed who were over military age was fully considered. This, it was stated, equally applied to London and Provincial weekly papers of large circulations, but here the military representative was not to consent to more than four months' exemption. At the end of 1917 the Union membership totalled 3,342 (an increase of 182) and there were 1,208 on service.

An interesting case was successfully fought by the Glasgow Branch of the Union on behalf of C. B. Fernie before the Greenock Military Tribunal. The military representative said that Fernie was given exemption at Greenock on the representations of his employers, the *Greenock Telegraph*. Fernie left there and joined the staff of the *Daily Record and Mail*, Glasgow. It was argued that the Greenock exemption should be withdrawn, and that the *Daily Record and Mail* should apply to the Glasgow Tribunal if they desired Fernie's exemption. The Union's solicitor replied that Fernie got his exemption on the ground of domestic hardship. If employment entered into it he was entitled to exemption in respect of his employment, but not in respect of a particular employer. The *Greenock Telegraph* ignored an application by Fernie for an increase of salary and he secured the Glasgow

post at a much higher figure. When he told the Greenock employers of his intention they threatened him with action by the military authorities. The solicitor said it was an outrageous attempt to use the military and the Service Acts to retain a man at a salary much less than he was entitled to. The Greenock Tribunal failed to see that any new circumstances had arisen. Fernie had been exempted on purely personal grounds and the exemption would be continued.

The last year of the war brought grievous losses on the battle fronts. In January came news of the death in action of Lieut. John Lethem, R.F.A., elder son of our former President and Treasurer, then editor of the *Daily Record and Mail*, Glasgow. He was a keen member of the Union. May was a black month. W. N. Watts succumbed to a long illness, and W. T. A. Beare, an ex-president, died after two years of broken health, during which we were glad to minister to his necessities. These were veterans of the Home Front. At the end of four years the Union had 1,255 members serving with the Colours, but allowing for discharges and casualties the total of those who had enlisted was 1,416, of whom 200 were holding commissions. One hundred and four had made the supreme sacrifice. One of them, Ivan Heald, left a verse which appealed to many a heart at home with the force of personal realism:

We sailed away from Sedd-el-Bahr
We are sailing home on Leave,
But this I know . . through all the years
Dead hands will pluck my sleeve.

Much of the flower of our youth was cut down. We older men, in our reveries, muse on the sacrifice and recall young men of the Sword and Pen whose death meant the loss of fine careers. Sergeant Leslie Coulson, who was killed on the Somme, was a bright spirit to whom I felt a warm attachment. He did brilliant work on the old *Standard*, and published not long before his death "From an outpost, and other poems," from which this touching verse is taken:

When I come home from dark to light
And tread the roadways long and white,
And tramp the lanes I tramped of yore,
And see the village greens once more,
The tranquil farms, the meadows free,
The friendly trees that nod to me,
And hear the lark beneath the Sun,
'Twill be good pay for what I've done,
When I come home!

Though many, like Leslie, never had the joy of home coming, those who mourned them were braced by their fate to keep the

Union flag flying, and to prepare as best they might for their comrades who should return. The conditions governing the calling-up of the older men liable had to be watched. As the huge armies on the Western Front swayed to and fro in those decisive struggles of mid-1918 the demand for men intensified and it was announced that newspapers would have to give up Grade I men up to the age of 43, and Grade II men up to 30, while men of the new military age, 41 to 50, would be called up for medical examination. A new certified occupations list came into force at the end of September, raising the age of reservation in the highest category by four years. This list governed the editorial and publishing staffs of newspapers, newsagency editorials, and the photographers, bromide printers and heads of dispatch rooms in press photographic agencies. Not long before my 46th birthday in 1918 I received a calling-up notice for medical examination, but in our attenuated sub-editorial staff on *The Times* I was presumably regarded as an essential man; the management made representations in the right quarters and nothing more was heard of it. Then came the Armistice on November 11.

Some hardship was caused to journalists, particularly night workers and those with fluctuating duty in a long "spread-over," by the statutory liability of service in the volunteers. In a letter to Mr. Hayes Fisher, President of the Local Government Board, I pointed out that owing to the depletion of staffs the men who remained were working at very high pressure, and often it meant real hardship and danger to efficiency to be compelled to do volunteer drills. Would it be possible, I asked, for the Board to issue an instruction to tribunals not to impose this liability on journalists, as was done in the case of practising pharmaceutical chemists? The reply was that an exempted man could appeal to the tribunal to be relieved of the volunteer duty if it was impracticable for him to discharge it. The President did not deem it justifiable to issue a general direction giving relief to any particular class of men; it was a matter entirely for the tribunal to decide on individual appeal. The instruction for the relief of chemists, it was explained, was given because of the importance of their work for the public health, and of their statutory Insurance duties, and must be regarded as altogether exceptional. In fairness it should be noted that the official memorandum on this matter to tribunals emphasised that full consideration must be given to the circumstances of appellants. Care must be taken

that the efficiency of men engaged on essential work should not be reduced by an unreasonable demand on their spare time, and this was the more important where men had for a long time been working much beyond their normal hours. Journalists did not seek preferential treatment, or try to dodge any duties within their powers. Some Fleet Street men, I remember, devoted spare hours to the arduous work of trench-digging on the outer London belt.

D.O.R.A., the short title of the Act under which Defence of the Realm Regulations were issued, was in the early period of the war the nightmare of journalists, whose liberties, in the words of one responsible commentator, " were menaced at every moment of the day". There could, of course, be no objection to the spirit and intention of the Regulations ; the trouble was that any local commandant who was a " competent naval or military authority " might institute a prosecution for what he regarded as an offence. Fortunately the Union succeeded in obtaining an important amendment of the Regulation which gave journalists some measure of security and confidence. In October, 1914, a Swansea reporter was arrested by the military authorities and brought before a Court-martial. The Union conducted the defence, at considerable cost, and secured his acquittal. Yet so completely self-contained and " local " was it, that the Home Secretary (the Minister in charge of the Act), when approached about the case, was entirely ignorant of any arrest or prosecution. In April, 1915, a case under the Regulations against the editor and manager of an Aberdeen newspaper was down for hearing in the Sheriff's Court there, but was abandoned.

The case which aroused the greatest attention occurred at Portland in the same month, and it was this that led to effective Union intervention. It became known as " the Dyson Case." A local journalist of that name sent telegraphic messages to London newspapers to the effect that some obstruction had been struck by a torpedo boat, naming the precise locality, and associating it with the sinking of an enemy submarine, U 29. Details given in the telegrams were stated by Admiralty witnesses to be of an indiscreet and dangerous nature, and likely to be of service to the enemy. Dyson in defence said he relied on the censorship in London to strike out anything objectionable, and pleaded ignorance of any instructions issued by the Censor to the Press. He was fined £5. The editor of a local paper was fined £10 for publishing a report of a similar, though less circumstantial,

character sent by Dyson as the paper's Portland reporter. An Admiralty witness said the report was a breach of the Regulations, but, though pressed, was unable to assign any reason for his opinion that it was likely to help the enemy. The editor, while admitting indiscretion, quoted a paragraph from a London evening paper of the sinking of a submarine, which was more definite in character and had apparently been allowed to pass by the Censor. He complained of a lack of uniformity in the censorship and of partiality as to local, provincial and London daily newspapers.

The Portland reporter (Charles Carter Dyson) appealed to a King's Bench Divisional Court for a rule calling on the justices of Dorchester to show cause why the conviction should not be brought up to be quashed. The ground of the application was that the justices acted without jurisdiction and that the conviction was bad on the face of it. Counsel submitted that regulation 18, under which Dyson purported to be convicted, was too wide, *ultra vires*, and not justified by the Defence of the Realm Act. If the conviction was good and the Regulation warranted by the Act, the result would be that the mere collection, recording or communicating of information which might be useful to the enemy was an offence, no matter for what purpose the information was collected, or with what intention it was communicated, and to whom it was sent. The telegrams sent to the London papers were ultimately read by the Press Censor and stopped, and were never published. Dyson had stated in evidence that he knew the telegrams would be sent to the Censor, who would delete any undesirable information. Counsel contended that it was never the intention to make it an offence to communicate information in that way. The Lord Chief Justice asked whether the journalist was supposed to be in a better position than any other person? Counsel replied that the transmission of news was the journalist's business and it was necessary that he should know where he stood. Mr. Justice Avory said the appellant hoped to be paid for the publication of the telegrams and therefore sent them with the object that they should be published. Counsel: No, not altogether. He may have hoped that parts which passed the Censor might be published. The application for the rule was refused. The *Star* had an acid leaderette on the case:

In one of his earliest apologies for the existence of his office, Sir Stanley Buckmaster (Director of the Official Press Bureau) said: "It ought to be remembered that the Press Bureau was the only thing that stood between the Press and the untempered severity of martial law." The exact value

of the protection will be apparent from the case at Portland . . . the reporter's defence that he relied on the censorship to strike out anything objectionable was thrust aside just as though the Solicitor-General's Bureau did not exist . . . The Solicitor-General protested in the House of Commons that "*if it were not for the office he held*, any newspaper which published any matter which, in the minds of the naval and military authorities, in the slightest degree imperilled the safety of our Forces, would have no defence." The meaning of the words we have italicised obviously is that the Press Censors' office does in fact provide a defence to a newspaper charged with innocently publishing such information. That "scrap of paper" is worth, as we see from the Portland prosecution, precisely nothing.

The Union was not a party to the appeal, and Dyson was not a member of the Union. The Institute of Journalists lodged the appeal on behalf of Dyson. The inaction of the N.E.C. aroused much criticism at the time; Central London Branch had urged co-operation with the Institute in the defence of Dyson, and after the appeal called for co-operation with "the Newspaper Society and all other representative bodies willing to act with us in approaching the Government," to secure amendment of the Regulation relating to the collection of news. In supporting this J. H. Harley, a member of the N.E.C., agreed that a mistake had been made in not participating in the appeal. Feeling ran high at the time, but there was more behind the attitude of the N.E.C. than some of the critics knew. Their reasoned statement had a sobering effect:

Mr. Dyson does not happen to be a member of the Union, but this was by no means a conclusive reason against action. The Executive were guided by the advice of Standing Counsel. He had a definite opinion that in law an appeal would not succeed, and there were other things besides. Success is, of course, not the only test; in some cases there may be good reasons why an appeal should be raised, even where it is almost certain to fail, and we do not wish, by any means, to disparage the effort which has been made to quash Mr. Dyson's conviction. But in this case all the reasons of expediency seemed to us to be the other way. We were advised that in the form in which the matter must necessarily come before the Court it was impossible to obtain a decision on the broad question of principle (the responsibility on the reporter) and that, even if an appeal succeeded, the position would really remain as dangerous as ever. The point to which we have directed our attention is the general protection not only of the reporter, but of the whole press, by setting up a central authority which shall exercise an intelligent control over all press prosecutions, and which will supersede a multitude of local naval or military authorities, who at the present time have quite a free hand to indulge eccentricities. That is the point which, after an interview with the Director of the Press Bureau, the Executive are now submitting to the Prime Minister, with a view to an amendment of the Order in Council. It is the surest way.

This was good argument, though at this distance of time I cannot remember whether it satisfied the critics. Wisely the N.E.C. were seeking an amendment which would prevent such episodes as the Dyson case. As the interview referred to brought

out points and principles, as well of permanent importance as of immediate urgency, it will be proper to give a brief record of it:

Sir Stanley Buckmaster, the Director of the Press Bureau, who was accompanied by Sir E. T. Cook, an assistant Director, received the Union deputation, which consisted of F. E. Hamer (President), George Leach (Standing Counsel), J. H. Harley (ex-President), T. Foster (member of Executive) and W. Veitch (chairman of the Parliamentary Branch). The case put by the deputation included the following points:

(1) That a reporter who is away from headquarters and therefore ignorant of the instructions of the Press Bureau, which were seen only by the editor and headquarters staff, would be placed in a perfectly impossible position if the transmission of a telegram was held to be publication;
(2) That the fundamental rule of journalism by which the editor assumes responsibility for publication should not be disturbed; and,
(3) That prosecutions under the censorship provisions of the Act should be instituted only with the sanction of the Director of the Press Bureau, or some other central authority, so as to ensure uniformity of treatment for all cases.

It was pointed out that at present any local commandant who is a "competent naval or military authority" may institute such prosecution, and that what one authority, and even the Censor himself, might regard as entirely unobjectionable another authority might consider a serious offence.

Sir Stanley Buckmaster, in a sympathetic reply, said the war inevitably entailed inconveniences on all classes, but there was no reason at all, simply because they were at war, that people should suffer injustice or inconvenience for which there was no need. He had no complaint to make against the general loyalty of the Press. It was some proof of that loyalty, and at the same time it was perhaps an indication of the reasonableness with which the authorities had acted (for the Bureau had stopped hundreds of telegrams without any prosecution following), that there had been only two cases of prosecution, in one of which the accused was acquitted. The Act was drawn necessarily in wide terms. Some cases of collection might be innocent and harmless, while others might be gravely mischievous, and he was sure collection would have to be retained as an offence. It all depended on the circumstances, which he naturally assumed would be taken into consideration both by the prosecution and the tribunal which tried the case. It was a fact that the Act and the Regulations left it to the local competent "naval or military authority" to institute the prosecutions, and he quite appreciated the point made by the deputation that with a view to securing uniformity the sanction of some central authority should be required. That, however, was not provided for in the Order in Council, and such an authority could not be created without an amendment to the order. So the matter was really out of his hands.

The appeal to the Prime Minister (Mr. Asquith) had what the N.E.C. regarded as a very satisfactory answer. There had never been any hope of limiting the wideness of the Regulations, but the new Order in Council which was conceded gave the change which the Union pressed for in the machinery of prosecution. This cardinal point was met in a new Regulation governing what were termed "press offences"—a fresh legal definition which recognised the distinctive position of newspapers in relation to D.O.R.A.

Where a person was alleged to be guilty of what appeared to be a press offence, it read: "the case, instead of being referred to the competent naval or military authority, shall be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Lord Advocate, or the Attorney General for Ireland, as the case may be, who shall investigate the case and determine whether or not the case is to be proceeded with: and if it to be proceeded with, whether it is to be tried by a court of summary jurisdiction, or by a civil court with a jury, or, subject to the rights of the offender if a British subject under the Defence of the Realm (Amendment) Act, 1915, and to the consent of the Admiralty or Army Council, by court martial.

"Press Offence" meant the publication or attempted publication, or communication or attempted communication for publication, in any newspaper or other periodical, or any reprint of any part thereof, of any information, report or statement in contravention of the provisions of these regulations. The decision of the officers above mentioned as to whether an alleged offence was a Press offence or was to be treated as such, was to be conclusive.

The recognition of the special position of the Press in the matter of news and also in the matter of prosecutions, was an achievement of magnitude. Instead of being at the mercy of a "crowd of local commandants" the Press, with all its special difficulties, now had the safeguard of decision by authorities of centralised experience and of full status. There was still a challenge to be met, however, on the question of what was a "Press Offence." George Spicer, of Dover, the well-known news correspondent, was charged before the justices at Dover in 1916 with communicating information calculated to be useful to the enemy, without lawful authority. It was proved that in a telephone conversation with a London press agency Spicer was heard to say: "Rumour about that German Fleet has appeared off Scarborough"; adding "For private information: putting a lot of troops at Deal and Sandwich all day, arriving all day; several thousands; expect some liveliness at sea." The justices dismissed the information on the ground that the facts ought to have been submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions as provided in the case of a "Press Offence," but that this had not been done. A King's Bench Divisional Court dismissed an appeal against the decision of the justices.

The Lord Chief Justice said the only point was whether the words used on the telephone were capable of being brought within the definition of a "Press Offence." The respondent was a Press agent and the proprietor of a newspaper himself and he was in communication with a press agency in London. The appellant contended that the use of the words "for private information" showed that the conversation was only one carried on between two friends without contemplation of any publication in a newspaper. The words merely appeared to mean that the

information must not be published until verified or until permission had been obtained. It was just because of the nature of communications which one member of the Press must make to another that this regulation was framed. Mr. Justice Lush agreed and said that if it was possible on the facts to take the view that the offence on investigation would turn out to be a "Press Offence," the matter must be referred to the Director before a prosecution could be instituted. Any general account of the working of the Press Bureau is not within the range of this book, which is concerned only with direct Union relations; but those who wish for an authoritative record should read "The Press in War-Time, with some account of the Official Press Bureau," by Sir Edward Cook (Macmillan, 1920).

A member of the Union at Harwich was in August, 1916, deported from that "fortress," as it was officially termed by the military authorities, for an alleged breach of Regulations in a telephone message to the London office of a news agency for which he acted as local correspondent. The office rang him up and he answered questions about British warships engaged when German warships bombarded Lowestoft and Yarmouth. The member, in laying his case before the N.E.C., said that it was not a criminal offence but an indiscretion in telephoning. Watts wrote to Mr. Lloyd George (then War Secretary) on his behalf. While expressing no opinion on the merits of the case the letter drew attention to the Regulation laying down procedure in regard to "Press Offences," and said it was far more urgently necessary that there should be a similar safeguard against the more drastic punishment of deportation, involving as it did in this case the destruction of the man's means of livelihood and the break-up of his home. After making inquiries Mr. Lloyd George said it appeared that this man, even after he was warned not to send communications from Harwich to London regarding the movements of British warships, persisted in doing so, and thus had only himself to blame for his position. The assurance was given that there was no intention of disregarding the provisions as to the prosecution of any *bona fide* journalist. The Army Council later stated in reply to a request to review the case, that they were advised that the action taken by the competent military authoirty at Harwich was neither irregular nor improper and in this view the Director of Public Prosecutions concurred. The last statement made it impossible for the Union to pursue the question of illegality. The member was then at Oxford, and afterwards got

permission to move to London, the condition attached to the permit being that he did not travel beyond six miles from his residence in Holloway. All the Union could do was to pay him benefit and try to get him work. In Feb., 1917, the deportee was given permission to return to his home at Harwich for one month on condition that he did not engage in journalistic work. The N.E.C. expressed the hope that he would soon obtain employment, and added that his benefit would be reviewed at the end of the month. They had done their best in a difficult case for six months.

A problem that faced the Union very early in the war was that of permits for press photographers. Efforts were made by Central London in the autumn of 1914 to obtain War Office permits for the use of these men at home. The names and photographs of 50 applicants were submitted. These included even the representatives of cinema firms, because they had been told by the C.O.'s of local camps that they could only be admitted on obtaining permits from the National Union of Journalists! The humour of this sideline diminished, however, as the correspondence increased. It was a slow job. A few permits would be granted; then all would be cancelled; then no more would be granted because it was found that a non-member who had obtained a permit had been using it in France. In vain was the assurance that the Union wanted only home permits. We got questions asked in Parliament, only to receive the official reply that the issue of permits had been given a trial and had not proved a success.

A press photographer fell a victim to his own enterprise in April, 1915. He was fined £5 and costs at Newcastle-on-Tyne for having, without the permission of "the competent naval and military authority"—that everlasting phrase became a bugbear to men who were honestly striving to do a national duty—taken photographs, and being in possession of the same near Elswick Works, contrary to Defence Regulation 19. He told the police that he had come specially from London to take photographs of the men praised by Mr. Asquith for their fine work, at a time when the country was interested in the question of workers and shirkers. The photographers wanted pictures, not of the works, but of the workers. The prosecutor said that the features of the works were shown in the plates, which might fall into other hands —even a spy in a lodging house or in the newspaper office where the plates were developed. The reply to this was that the pictures would have been submitted to the Censor and anything objectionable would have been deleted. The Bench accepted the

defendant's explanations, but the Regulation had been broken, awkward precedents must not be created, and the penalty must be imposed.

The Press has often had to contend with stubbornness and reluctance in officialdom when it sought to obtain reasonable facilities for the performance of its public work. In war time this was magnified, and the Union learned to expect only grudging concessions, and an innate tendency to refuse any recognition of rights. This had to be faced in the autumn of 1917, when the Central London Branch, in co-operation with the N.P.A., managed with difficulty to obtain the official issue of " permit books " for journalists whose good faith was certified by their employers, authorising them to go about their business of collecting information concerning air raids, processions, fires and other events in which police restrictions ordinarily make difficult the reporter's work. But there was a snag in this. A paragraph in the book imposed a vexatious limitation : " This recommendation does not in itself entitle the holder to enter a zone from which the Press is excluded." Thus any local officer in charge could nullify the the rights which the permit was presumably designed to confer, and everything depended on the personal attitude of the officer. In one instance three daily paper reporters who showed their permit books at a street barrier in an air-raided district were told by the police officer in charge that he had never heard of the permit books. There the concession proved quite useless.

While the Union was endeavouring to secure a fair field, in this and many other ways, for the discharge of the proper functions of journalism, important events were in progress inside newspaper offices which demanded a constant vigil. The main concern was the level of salaries—the restoration of cuts, the maintenance of old standards, poor as they were, the encouragement of war bonuses, and the development of the permanent policy of economic uplift, even under difficult war conditions. For achievements in this vital work the reader must be referred to other parts of this book. It was not creditable to a large section of the journalists of the country that they failed to appreciate and support all that was being done for them. Big national wage successes did not move them to action. In May, 1918, when the minimum had been won in Fleet Street, and the way opened to a great advance, a writer in the *Journalist* could be found to say : " It is not creditable that in the *Daily Telegraph* office, where after stubborn resistance we have succeeded only within the last few days in

inducing the proprietors to raise to our minimum all salaries hitherto below it, there should be nearly fifty members of the staff still standing aloof from the Union." The paper was generous in its war bonus, and we understood that Lord Burnham was taking a closer personal interest in those matters. Similar conditions prevailed in other offices, and it was unfair to Union leaders and negotiators that they should be sent into action without essential " ammunition," such as facts of the actual wage position all over the country, and perhaps even more vital than that, the moral support of a loyal and united rank and file. All honour to the members and officials who did do their best in the common fight. Nowadays, when our numerical strength has doubled, it is hard to realise that, in those testing times, so many could find it possible to stand aside inert and indifferent.

The practice of " blacking " copy, and the exchange of proofs between papers, which increased as staffs grew smaller by degrees, caused grave concern to the N.E.C., on account of its inherent possibilities of future mischief. There was no objection to temporary expedients to meet war emergencies, but clearly the position needed safeguarding. The system became prevalent in Cardiff in the spring of 1916, and actually led to several dismissals. The local branch of the Union made a strong protest and the N.E.C. declared: " As no change in newspaper business has been put forward to justify this sudden and drastic change of policy, journalists are alarmed and resentful, and request an immediate cessation of blacking. The Executive has decided to support them." The N.E.C. asked the proprietors to receive a deputation and to give the matter immediate attention. Also they approached Sir Geo. Riddell in London, as he was associated with the *Western Mail*, Cardiff. They informed him by telegram that a system of blacking and the use of one report for two papers, had been imposed on reporters to enable one firm to carry [illegible] and unjust programme of dismissals, not justifi[illegible] It was arranged that Lethem should see [illegible] George Riddell and Pegg, Meakin and Watts, meet repres[illegible] of the *Western Mail* and the *South Wales Daily News*.

Fortunately good sense prevailed and the grievance was removed. Mr. (later Sir) W. Davies, the editor of the *Western Mail*, in a letter confirming the arrang[illegible] accepted, assured the N.E.C. that any reductions of staff we[illegible] in no way related to the question of blacking; no unfair advanta[illegible] would be taken of the arrangement made, which was a purely tempo[illegible]ence

during the special stress of war time. He concluded: "I thank you for the courteous and clear manner in which you explained the case. The Union is well served when it places its interests in the hands of Messrs. Watts and Pegg." Ever loyal to the Union, Pegg, who was leader writer on the *Western Mail*, gave valued help in this successful stand. The South Wales Branch thanked the N.E.C. for its work, and said that as a result of closer contact with that body they had gained an excellent impression of the value of the work done at Manchester for members of the Union generally. In a confidential letter to branches the N.E.C. communicated the following resolution:

That it be laid down as a matter of principle that no member shall be permitted to be exchanged, or lent by one employer to another, or proofs or blacks interchanged, unless a guarantee satisfactory to the Union is given that the member so lent shall be adequately remunerated for his services, and that he will work under decent and fair conditions, and that the arrangement shall not continue after the war.

The N.E.C. added the hope that in cases where reports were interchanged members would stipulate that it was only for the duration of the war, and would communicate the facts to headquarters. The custom, however, continued in a sporadic way. Where it seemed unavoidable members sought to get fair compensation. Northampton, for instance, suggested a penny a line, and a minimum of 3/- per engagement for blacked and exchanged reports, but this led to the local abandonment of the practice. The N.E.C. found it necessary in June, 1916, in view of the growth of the system and of the serious effect it would have on employment and conditions, to instruct members that in no circumstances must they undertake or continue to do blacking without the authority and consent of the N.E.C., and to give the warning that failure to observe the instructions would be held to constitute conduct detrimental to the interests of the Union, the penalty for which might be expulsion. This was the first occasion on which the Executive had threatened expulsion since the dispute at York. The danger was clearly stated in the *Journal*:

"Blacking" enables one man to do the work of two. Under Communistic conditions of society it would therefore be excellent, as it would enable the work of men to be halved. But in modern circumstances it means increased work for one man, and no work, and therefore no living for the other. That being so, it increases the margin of unemployment and thereby tends to cancel the advantage which accrues to labour when it is scarce in the market . . . what may be permitted as a measure of war-time emergency may become a permanent danger unless its introduction is accompanied by the most rigid safeguards. The greatest safeguard against the perpetuation of exchanges of news in peace time is that it shall not be found to be financially profitable to newspaper propri-

etors in war time. For that reason the N.E.C. holds strongly to the view that where one man does the work of two, he shall receive such extra remuneration as will deprive the employer of financial benefit . . . unless members are very careful blacking may degenerate into blacklegging when our comrades in khaki come back and want work . . . We cannot, though some members appear to think we can, deal with the problem under the Copyright Act. The copyright of a staff man's contributions is vested in his employer unless he has had it assigned to himself in his agreement.

When Peterborough and Huntingdon complained that papers were " lifting " reports members were advised to get an assignment of copyright from their employers, thus enabling them to secure payment for " lifted " matter. Derby reported that an editorial staff were being compelled to undertake proof reading, and the N.E.C. replied that unless the practice involved excessive or additional hours of work they could not interfere, but there might be reasonable claim for extra remuneration. In spite of the warning " blacking " was reported from various districts, and in December, 1916, Watts issued a circular of a peremptory character. In view of the reduction of staffs, consequent on alteration in the Reserved Occupations List, there would probably be a resort to " blacking " and other duplications of work between different papers. He therefore reminded members of the instruction issued in the previous June. It was understood that members were undertaking additional work for comparatively trifling sums. " This will not do . . . if the employer finds the ' blacking ' system cheap and easy it may occur to him to make it permanent." Watts added that there was every reason to believe that newspapers at that time were doing much better financially than earlier in the war; economies had been effected by reduction in the sizes of papers; advertisements, though still far from normal, were growing and in many cases the selling price of the paper was being increased. A little later the N.E.C. fixed a scale of payment to be asked for " blacking " and the exchange of proofs, viz., 5/- a column, with a minimum of 3/6 for any one engagement, while branches were informed that in special circumstances, such as the payment by proprietors of allowances to dependants of soldier members, the cases should be remitted to the N.E.C. for consideration.

In February, 1917, the N.E.C. announced that they would be prepared to support opposition to " blacking " after the war and that if any conditions arose with which the N.E.C. did not agree, support would be given to any action taken. An attempt to circumvent Union watchfulness was made at Northampton. A reporter had to cover two, or perhaps, three engagements simulta-

neously, and could only do it by relying on professional camaraderie and "milking" the copy of colleagues. Thus the paper got the benefit of two or three men's services for the wages of one. The branch refused to be exploited and the scheme failed. In January, 1919, the N.E.C., in view of the termination of hostilities, expressed the emphatic opinion that the system of "blacking," sanctioned at extra pay as a war time expedient in the interests of newspaper production, should cease "in order that employment may be found as readily as possible for members returning from the Forces"; they therefore instructed members to give one month's notice to employers to terminate the practice.

The forms of helpful Union activity directly arising out of the war were simply multifarious. Some points only can be given. The first application from a soldier member for financial help came from Southampton, where Judd (then hon. secretary of the Branch) kept the N.E.C. fully informed on all matters, including local prosecutions of photographers under D.O.R.A. The soldier had a separation allowance of 17/6, and 5/- a week from his employer. His wife and child had a bare 15/- a week to subsist on after paying 7/6 rent. Protests were made against insufficient civil liability grants and war pensions, and also against refusal of pensions. The latter caused indignation. Mr. J. M. Hogge, M.P., called the refusal of a pension to the widow and family of a soldier member in South Wales a shocking case. He raised this and other cases in Parliament, at the request of the Union and some satisfaction was obtained. From the firing line came a message: "The Union is doing great things for the men who are risking their lives. We shall find when we get back far better conditions than in the past." A cheering letter reached me from an officer member on the Western Front: "Greetings and heartiest congratulations on reaching the presidential chair of the Union. As a fellow member my heart is with you in your efforts on behalf of the Union and journalism. I trust you may have a record year of office."

In Sept., 1918, the N.E.C. protested against the inadequacy of soldiers' and sailors' separation allowances. The wife and six young children of a soldier member had to live on £3 3s. a week, which included the earnings of two children. All the money was spent in food and rent, leaving nothing for clothes, boots, etc. The restrained comment was that this was not extravagance, for no one could be properly fed at that time on less than 10/- a week! This was the nation's liability, and the War Distress Fund was

not raised to relieve taxpayers. In 1916 an attack was made by a member of Parliament on Ellis Hughes, a member of the South Wales Branch. Mr. Lloyd George made an effective defence and compelled the withdrawal of the offending statements and an apology; for which he received formal Union thanks. Some small branches were almost extinguished by enlistment. Dumfries reported that all its members, except the acting-secretary and a member living 40 miles away, had joined the Army. Against this may be set the revival of the Lincoln Branch through the brilliant propaganda efforts of C. P. Robertson, of the Royal Flying Corps, who was stationed near by at South Carlton. This was after all attempts to resuscitate the branch had failed. In a letter replying to thanks Robertson modestly said that he had not been doing any flying for some weeks due to a reorganisation of the wing and he had found time to do a little N.U.J. work "just to keep my hand in."

Owing to Union initiative the staffs of daily papers had their first real Christmas holiday in 1919, by the non-publication on Christmas and Boxing Days. A big composite deputation, representing the N.U.J., and all the other unions of newspaper workers, went to the N.P.A. and submitted the idea. It was readily adopted, but Lord Burnham stated that the decision was without prejudice to future action. Fortunately it came to be a precedent and the custom is a continuing boon. During the war various modifications were made in Union administrative machinery, but these need not detain us, except perhaps to mention that a proposal I ventured to make for a "War Cabinet" was deemed too drastic, and the Unemployment Bureau was opened to men in work who desired to better themselves, without detriment to the actual unemployed.

At the Cease Fire the Union had a membership of 3,629, of whom 1,171 were on service. In my review of the position at the 1919 A.D.M. as President, I said that journalism had felt the shock and strain of the war severely. Welcome to returning sailor and soldier comrades was tinged with the grateful reflection that those who had been spared the perils of the battle front had done their best on the home front to make the land of newspaperdom more fit for heroes to live and work in. "The record of the wartime work of the Union, performed under exceptional difficulties, but with a rare spirit of loyalty, would, he believed, in days to come furnish a creditable chapter in our history." During 1918 preparations for the demobilisation stage had been under

way, and indeed long before that consideration had been given to some of the problems. There was the menace of non-qualified men getting into the profession by the aid of War Pensions Committees. This was met by a call for efforts to ensure a period of training and then a recognised minimum standard rate of wages. The University of London came along with its Diploma Course for Journalism, started primarily for demobilised officers and men, in the control of which the Union took its share. After the Armistice it was announced that priority of release from service would be given to officers and men who had definite employment awaiting them. A strictly limited number of pivotal men was being released in advance of general demobilisation, these being men whose services were of "immediate national value." Yet newspapers were not included, while accountants and solicitors were, in spite of a passage in a Government notice of November, stating: "At the present juncture the Press can render most important service by creating the right atmosphere for the new Demobilisation Department to work in." The War office did something to release men temporarily for election work, but the ways of officialdom were as inscrutable as ever, and newspaper proprietors who badly wanted men were urged to bring pressure to bear on local commandants, on tribunals and on the War Office itself.

Meanwhile many members were writing to the Union from France, Egypt and elsewhere inquiring about vacancies. The number of home men on the waiting list was ample to fill vacancies. Demobilisation had to precede notification of vacancies. A useful concession was obtained for free lances. The Controller General of Civil Demobilisation and Resettlement (some title!) concurred in my suggestion as President that free lance journalists should be treated for demobilisation purposes as proprietors of one-man businesses; and a somewhat elaborate procedure laid down would ensure "sympathetic consideration." The national minimum had been established and the A.D.M. of 1919 requested the N.E.C. to endeavour to secure that staffs should be brought up to pre-war strength, and that the number of juniors should be limited. On a subject that acutely touched the feelings of delegates it was resolved "that where men enlisted on an implicit understanding that they would be reinstated or demobilised at the request of employers, are not taken back, or when taken back are discharged after a brief period, the Executive shall select some suitable case in which to take strong industrial action." The maintenance of

salary standards was equally important. Central London appealed to " demobbed " men not to embarrass the Union movement by accepting jobs below standard pay. Happily it was reported for the whole country that several men had preferred to suffer unemployment rather than accept less than the full rates, and three gallant fellows, on learning of those rates, had gone back to the Army instead of taking up posts which they had accepted at less than the agreed minimum. " This is the spirit," it was written, " which will make the Union an instrument capable of raising journalism to undreamt-of heights." As far as was ascertainable at the 1919 A.D.M. 138 Union members had been killed in action, approximately one in ten of those who served.

A great amount of help in cases of need and distress arising out of the War was given from a fund started by the Union Executive at the end of 1916. It was the conception of Alf. Martin, of Sheffield, then Vice-President of the Union. On his motion it was decided to open a National War Distress Fund, and it was rightly felt that it would meet with " the hearty approval of all who have been serving national and Union interests at home during the War." The intention was to deal mainly with exceptional cases of distress, particularly with the widows and children of members who fell in the War, and to supplement where necessary any benevolent grants made for such purpose. Martin's fine impulse met with a great and growing response from Union branches everywhere and over a long period members and officials learned, like the family in Goldsmith's " Traveller," the luxury of doing good. Martin opened the list with a donation of 25 guineas, and with the support of the Executive and branch officials a goodly sum was in the bank even before a widespread appeal could be made. A committee appointed to administer the Fund consisted of the President (E. Williams), vice-President (Martin), Hon. General Treasurer (W. Veitch), hon. general secretary (W. N. Watts), T. A. Roberts and F. J. Mansfield.

So modest was the estimate at first that the founder talked of £500 as an objective, and then of £1,000. The object so struck the imagination of the Union that up and down the land energy and ingenuity were freely expended in work for the Fund, so that well over £5,000 was raised by the end of the opening year. The Fund was registered under the War Charities Act, and kept quite distinct from the ordinary work of the Union, and was separately administered. It was the only object connected with the Union for which any outside appeal was made (unless to a small degree

for the Special Unemployment Fund), and the benefits were not strictly confined, as time went on, to members of the Union. When the Fund had run its course by the year 1933, and had disbursed the sum of £13,761, the proud claim could be made that a call for help from any member of the Forces, or his dependants, had always been promptly and sympathetically responded to. Those who managed the business soon realised that it would be a long-term job, for the care of children and the completion of their education must often be a matter of years. After seventeen years of beneficent work, when the balance in hand was only £1 7s. 9d., the final grant having been made, the Fund was wound up, and an honourable chapter in Union history ended as unobtrusively as it began.

Remember the circumstances of its origin. Union funds had been weakened by the support given to men whose wages in the first period of war panic had been cut—to 25/- and £1 in some instances. Three-quarters of our provincial members were getting not more than 35/- a week. A large number of members were serving with the Colours and Union contributions were at a low ebb. Criticism was growing of the low rates of war pensions, and of the smallness of civil liabilities grants. To their lasting credit be it said, the branches, small as well as big, rallied to the help of the Fund, first with their own gifts, and then in the promotion of all sorts of public ventures, from whist drives and work parties to theatricals on the grand scale. The appeals touched a responsive cord in the hearts of public men and those who controlled theatres lent them freely. If ever a cause was sound as well as merciful this was it. Many cases of desolate homes brightened could be quoted but only a typical one can be given. A man discharged from the Army with T.B. was ordered warmth and fresh air. His job was not kept open for him; he had a wife and children and no means. The W.D.F. sent him to Torquay, with the command: "Don't worry. We'll see to the kiddies, too."

About 500 cases were dealt with. First the applications were made to the branch concerned, then investigation was undertaken, and every case requiring help was recommended to the Fund executive. At an early stage, when grants were few and the bank balance was growing fast, the voice of the critic was heard. Whereupon Martin wrote me saying that, although some of the applications "seemed a bit thin," he favoured erring on the side of generosity so that there could be no accusation of "hoarding."

Events soon nullified both doubts, and in its long history the Fund enjoyed the confidence and gratitude of all concerned. Although at one time a proposal was made for a compulsory Union levy the Fund was fortunately able to carry on its work on a voluntary footing, and it certainly relieved the Union of a big moral liability at a time when benevolent grants grew to double the proportions of regular unemployment benefit. There was a further financial complication. After Watts's death in 1918 a memorial fund was raised for the benefit of his widow and family, which naturally had a strong claim upon the whole membership. During 1918-19 no appeal was officially issued by the N.E.C. for the War Distress Fund, but while the Watts Fund was being accumulated the campaign for the W.D.F. was loyally maintained by the branches. In 1919 there was a big jump in the W.D.F. disbursements. There were special demands during the demobilisation period, but that was a transient phase, to be followed by longer calls for the maintenance of dependants, and for those journalists who had returned to civil life incapacitated for their ordinary work. Parcels were sent to prisoners of war in enemy countries, and war orphans received Christmas gifts.

A fine spirit of emulation possessed the whole Union in its really amazing effort to raise money by any and every honest means for the Fund, and if my space limits allowed a lively story could be written about it. When nearly everybody did something, and the smallest branch often did more proportionately than the big, it would be a hazardous venture to attempt to allot credit. But it may well be recorded that London started the matinee movement, which achieved the most striking results. In June, 1917, the sum of £515 was raised by a matinee at the Ambassadors Theatre; other big districts followed suit and it remained to London to score its crowning triumph in 1919 with a matinee at the Coliseum. The actual proceeds were £2,797, but to this was added £525 realised in New York by the sale of a Lloyd George letter paying tribute to the American War effort. London had aimed at £4,000 and apologised for its " comparative failure." Veitch, the Union's General Treasurer, said at the ensuing A.D.M. that " the success was due entirely to Foster." This was a generalisation and the recipient of the tribute would quite fairly enter a *caveat*, seeing that a loyal band of workers had done their best. The truth was that Foster's flair for novelty in propaganda was the trump card of the promoters, and our Scottish treasurer was not given to over-statement. To my certain know-

ledge Foster had to pay for his successes by being called on for hints on how to run a matinee by many branch officers, and his detailed replies excited the admiration of his catechists. One interesting "sideshow" was an auction by Mr. George Robey of historic war documents and souvenirs, which had been collected with much resource and ingenuity. They included a tin of tobacco with a bullet hole, which had been shot off a table at which General Sir Ian Hamilton and his staff were sitting at H.Q., Helles, Gallipoli, with the story in the General's writing; President Wilson's famous Fourteen Points autographed; a gift of two Shetland ponies; and a photograph of Offenburg in Germany, taken at a height of 19,000 feet by British bombing airmen during a daylight raid—a striking forerunner of familiar R.A.F. doings in the present war. Martin, as parent of the Fund, took an unfailing interest in all these enterprises. He made a special trip from Sheffield to London for one matinee and was rewarded by being presented to King Manoel, who was much impressed by the information that he was the official head of so many thousands of British journalists.

And now, in concluding this little record of the War Distress Fund, a few words about its founder Alf Martin himself. When he came into prominence in the Union he was sports editor of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*. He specialised in football and wrote in a racy, chatty style. While he warmly congratulated us in London on our success with the N.P.A. he qualified it by condemning their refusal to place the sporting men on the same salary level as the general staffs, as "the most absolute nonsense." The sporting journalist worked as hard as any of the others, he protested, and sometimes harder. Any differentiation in the character and quality of the work did not appeal to him. In his earlier life he was at Grantham and for a time was a proprietor. His business aptitudes were valuable in his Union activities. For a time he took a close interest in the conduct of the *Journalist*, and now and then he had a clash with Richardson. He thought that Richardson took undue advantage of his editorship to "boost" affiliation, and the poor display of good matter caused him frequent annoyance. "This *Journalist* is a good second to a parish magazine," he protested in a letter in which he hoped "the alert three are recovering from matinee work." Perhaps his own chronic ill health made Martin hypercritical, but the way he summed us all up in his letters was amusing. Hagon, who was talked of as Vice-President, was a rum-stick, a bundle of nerves;

Brown wrote miles and miles of letters on piffling things; Ainger said the make-up of the *Journalist* was "rotten," and London "would turn it out so smartly"; Meakin as publicity officer did not show enterprise and ideas—and so on. On Dec. 18, 1917, he headed a long letter to me: "22nd Union letter to-day! What are you paying for a wholetime man?" He seemed to write me that year, as his second in command, every other day almost.

We all took him for what he was—one of the keenest Union workers, a publicist with bright ideas, a most hospitable man and a good pal. At one A.D.M. he had a cubby corner where creature comforts were lavishly bestowed on those who needed and deserved them. On that occasion I had to make a responsible speech, unfortunately of greater length than is usual among journalists, and when it was over Martin insisted on a visit to his parlour for a draught of stronger liquor than I was accustomed to, to revive my energies. The over-work which he endured when he was President, and when he started the War Distress Fund, took heavy toll of his vitality, and he was constantly patching himself up for exhausting travel and meetings. In the autumn of 1918, he left Sheffield for Nottingham and as his new work made it impossible for him to attend meetings he regretfully resigned the treasurer-ship of the W.D.F., and was succeeded by Veitch. Thereafter the administrative work fell largely upon Veitch and myself, as President of the Fund, and we set up card indexes and all the paraphernalia of a busy job at the Union office, 180, Fleet Street. As he neared the end of his strenuous period of Union work Martin was bordering on nervous breakdown and he wrote that his people had told him he could get away for a couple of months if he liked. It is pleasant to note that this was not the only example of considerate employers who gave practical shape to their appreciation of the work of Union leaders. Martin died in 1922 at the age of 57.

One other topic connected with the Great War is the Whitley Council scheme sponsored by the Government in pursuance of the guarantees given by Parliament and of the pledges given by employers, to restore trade union rules and customs suspended during the War. The N.U.J. welcomed the plan and patient and prolonged efforts were made to bring it into operation in the newspaper industry. Unfortunately my space does not allow me to tell the story of a movement in which I took a leading part in my presidential year. The negotiations broke down on the

claim of the Institute to have representation on the workers' side of the Council—a claim the trade unions could not allow. Although we failed to get a Whitley Council we did get a practical equivalent in the Joint Industrial Council which has done excellent work for the newspaper industry in the provinces. Richardson did long service on the Council and bore striking testimony to its genius for conciliation. The Council's success is the pride of the P. & K.T.F.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GENERAL STRIKE: A CRISIS IN THE UNION.

IN its comparatively short career the National Union has had its critical stages, of varied character and magnitude, but in perspective the General Strike of 1926 is seen to have been the severest ordeal through which it passed. At the time the situation became so ominous that many doubted whether the Union would survive. The short, sharp struggle, envisaged at the time as one between the trade unions, in a chivalrous attempt to aid the miners, and the Government, in the maintenance of law and constitution against a revolutionary action designed to coerce Parliament, remains an unforgettable experience to all who went through it. The N.U.J. was not legally and technically involved. It was not affiliated to the Trades Union Congress, which called the strike, and the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, to which it was affiliated, had no part whatever in the strike. But, as our first rule declares, "the society is a trade union," and we were bound to be implicated in a national crisis in which the whole trade union movement was directly concerned. Not only so. The T.U.C. included the newspaper industry in its action, and the printing and mechanical unions affiliated to it responded in loyalty to the decision of the General Council. Not all of them, however, complied with readiness. There was no dispute in the newspaper industry, and the feeling of reluctance to strike against employers with whom they had no quarrel was strong in many places. But the mighty momentum of a national offensive for justice to the miners carried all of them along with it.

The solidarity of the trade union movement, in which most of the unions had taken a long and loyal part, the developed sense of discipline, and loyalty to the national leaders, prevailed. These factors were not so fully evolved in the N.U.J. In addition to this absence of a firm trade union tradition, the N.U.J. had to

reckon with that feeling of "loyalty to the paper" which survived strongly in the journalistic breast, with the pronounced individualism innate in the mental make-up of the journalist, and with the mixed politics of a membership, large numbers of which saw in the call of the Government for a rally in support of Parliament and the constitution, a patriotic duty to keep the newspapers going, in spite of the trade union mandate for a stoppage. Here were all the elements of possible disintegration in the ranks of the N.U.J., and both for Union leaders and the membership at large it was a distressing dilemma. These were dangerous days indeed, and this generation of journalists may well be thankful that the Union survived, and stands to-day stronger than ever.

It is not my duty to give a history of the General Strike, but the main facts must be recorded as a necessary setting for the Union's reaction. On April 30, 1926, the Government subsidy to the coal industry, on which £23,000,000 had been spent, ceased, and the owners' notices to terminate contracts (the lock-out) were to take immediate effect. The whole trade union organisation was strongly imbued with a sense of the injustice of the rates of wages in the mines, aggravated by the owners' demand for reductions. The Samuel Commission recommended a scheme of re-organisation of the coal industry, and pending the realisation of this the miners were asked to accept a wage reduction as a step in the economic recovery of the industry. This they refused to do, and there were strenuous negotiations to reach a settlement, in which the Government, the owners and miners and the General Council of the T.U.C. all took part. The critical position on April 30 led the Government to warn local authorities of the possibility of a larger stoppage than in the coal fields, and of measures necessary to meet an emergency. On Saturday, May 1, the T.U.C. announced its intention to call a general strike, to begin at midnight on May 3. A "state of emergency" was declared by Royal Proclamation in the *London Gazette*, under the Emergency Powers Act, 1920. The emergency was defined as action taken or immediately threatened which, by interfering with the supply and distribution of food, water, fuel or light, or the means of locomotion, threatened to deprive the community of the essentials of life. For the T.U.C. it was stated that the policy of the General Council was that the General Strike order was a reply to the signing of the Emergency Proclamation, and upon information of the activities of the O.M.S. (Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies), which the T.U.C. regarded as

proof that the Government was "mobilising for war." The plan was given as first to stop transport and then immediately printing and the press, but the Council directed the continuance of sanitary services and no interference with health and food services. The actual calling out of workers was left to the executives of the unions; directions for discipline and against incitements to disorder were issued. Instructions to cease work were freely telegraphed by executives on the Saturday.

In this tense atmosphere on May 1 and 2 negotiations were maintained in Downing-Street. They continued until after midnight on May 2, but at 1 a.m. on May 3 the Government issued a statement that it had come to their knowledge that specific orders for the General Strike had been sent out, and that moreover "overt acts have already taken place, including gross interference with the freedom of the Press." Such action involved a challenge to constitutional rights, and the Government must require repudiation of the action and the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the instructions for a General Strike. Measures for the maintenance of essential supplies and the necessary movements of troops were at once taken by the Government. One "overt act" of which the Government were informed during the *pourparlers* at Downing Street was the stoppage of the publication of the *Daily Mail* by members of some unions who objected to the leading article entitled "For King and Country." The Natsopas (members of the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants) working at Carmelite House, the headquarters of the *Daily Mail*, took exception to the article and were supported by the machine managers, the stereotypers and the packers. Sir Andrew Caird, I believe, was in editorial control at the time, and when confronted with a demand for alterations in the article, replied forcibly that not a sentence, not a comma, would be altered. Thereupon the staffs above mentioned ceased work and there was no issue of the paper from Carmelite House on the Monday morning.

The trouble in that office occurred 24 hours before the time of the beginning of the General Strike, and the T.U.C. promptly issued a disclaimer. They said they had no knowledge of the "overt acts" referred to, that such independent and unauthorised action was definitely forbidden, and that prompt measures were being taken to prevent any acts of indiscipline. In the House of Commons on Monday night, in the course of a full debate, the Prime Minister (Mr. Stanley Baldwin), reviewing events at length,

said that he learned of the "overt acts" about 11-30 p.m. on Sunday when he went to consult his colleagues. Those acts, in anticipation of the General Strike, were perhaps not so great in themselves, but were, he said, great in their possible consequences and certainly in their signification. Mr. Arthur Henderson stated in the Commons on May 5 that he really believed that but for the interference with the *Daily Mail* a formula for peace would have been found. According to current reports there were other "overt acts." On the Saturday the Natsopas challenged the printing of an advertisement in the *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Express*. Headed "O.M.S." the advertisement gave details of the depots for the maintenance of public supplies. As a concession, in order to get to press, it was agreed to "bash" the advertisement in one paper and the *Sunday Times* appeared with a blank under "O.M.S." It was explained afterwards that these various acts were taken by Natsopa chapels in the offices, and not by the Union.

The action of a section of the trade unionists at Carmelite House was directed to the control of the expression of editorial opinion and for the moment it had a localised success. But the public saw that the T.U.C. action would stop the Press altogether, and this policy was widely condemned—indeed a big section of Labour opinion was dead against it. While the *Daily Mail* failed to appear in London on that Monday the Manchester staff of the paper produced its full quota complete with the leading article, 50,000 of these being conveyed to London. Ordinarily the paper was printed simultaneously in London and Manchester, but both offices were closed by the General Strike. The Paris office remained in operation and was able to send over large supplies, produced under editorial staff men rushed over from London during the strike. When the real stoppage began most of the country's newspapers were in difficulties, and all kinds of make-shift sheets were published by varied processes to maintain some show of a news service. Printing offices in the country, which managed to do some work while the strike proceeded, helped to produce many of the national papers, but some of these dailies were reduced to small quarto sheets. *The Times* did conspicuous service by appearing in its usual size, if not thickness, and giving excellent reports of Parliament, and legal decisions, with a brave display of official and general news. Printing House Square did this on every strike day but one—Wednesday, May 5. That day its issue was a single sheet measuring thirteen inches by eight,

No. 44,263, price 2d. It served the valuable purpose of preserving the continuity of the paper, and its serial number. By drastic sub-editorial compression the vital news of the day was conveyed in this novel format. The matter was in typewriting, and the total issue, printed by six multigraph machines, numbered 48,000, which, needless to say, was eagerly bought by a public avid of news of the great struggle.

The battle waged by the whole of the nation's Press for publication by any and every means makes a fascinating story, but it is, of course, outside the limits of this book. One or two stray facts may be mentioned. On May 3 the *Evening News* proposed to print the article " For King and Country " which was the cause of the conflict in the *Daily Mail.* The compositors set it and the stereotypers cast the plates, but the Natsopas and Machine Managers demanded its withdrawal, which the editor refused. It was pointed out that the T.U.C. had forbidden such unauthorised action, and the staff referred the question to the Natsopa Executive. Later the men announced, so the paper stated, that the Executive had replied that it could give no guidance. The men then decided not to produce the paper, and it did not appear. Editions of the *Evening Standard* also were not published because the Natsopas, machine minders, stereotypers and warehousemen and packers (four unions out of a total of eleven represented in the office) objected to a news item on recruiting scenes in Whitehall. *The Star* was not exempt. The machine minders demanded the removal of a paragraph about the Government's request for volunteers, from an afternoon edition, and thereupon the remaining editions were cancelled.

The *Daily Express* could not, of course, be out of the hunt. It published the story of Fleet Street under the banner head: " A great epic of journalism." It told how, on Sunday night, May 2, a deputation of its workers expressed disagreement with a leading article supporting the Government and predicting the failure of the strike. Lord Beaverbrook and the editorial chiefs decided to make no alteration, but " to put the case for publication patiently and courteously to the deputation." The workers, " with admirable fairness," accepted the position as laid down and the paper duly appeared with not a word altered. But on Tuesday " the newspaper world of London was like a stricken lion." The compositors had not yet left work, but " the presses were silent and grim "; men who had worked the night before were now pickets and the struggle was on. The paper added, with its

expected tone of hostility to the N.U.J.: "What of those junior members of the editorial staff who were members of the National Union of Journalists? Supposing their union issued orders? It did—and the Union collapsed like a house of cards. Without an exception every member of the editorial staff volunteered for any task to keep their paper on the street. There was only one loyalty: there could be only one—the *Daily Express*." Due allowance may be made for the tension of the moment, but another gibe at the Union by the same paper is referred to elsewhere in this book. That they did not represent the considered opinion of the editor, Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld, may be inferred from the fact that later he took an active part in the effort to bring about fusion between the Institute and the Union. Evidently in that connection the Union had some real value.

There were two papers standing directly *vis-à-vis* throughout the crisis. One, *The British Gazette*, published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, was the official Government organ, produced under the direction of Mr. Winston Churchill, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the office of the *Morning Post*, which paper was obliterated for the period of the strike, and immediately on its termination re-appeared as a penny paper. The "opposition" paper was *The British Worker*, an "official strike news bulletin," published by the General Council of the T.U.C. *The Gazette*, by virtue of its official status, had a great advantage in the scramble for publicity, and although its reputation as a newspaper was a doubtful quantity, it enjoyed a mounting circulation, beginning with 232,000 on May 5 and reaching 2,209,000 on May 12, its penultimate issue. This involved a huge consumption of paper, and it was found necessary to commandeer newsprint stocks. *The Times*, which had to yield 89 reels of paper, published a vigorous protest. It was struggling with a skeleton staff to appear daily, and that was only done with the aid of pensioners called back to duty, some editorial men as amateurs in the mechanical and distributive departments, a woman linotype operator, and a multigraph staff producing an alternative miniature sheet daily. The protest, published on May 12, headed "The Government and *The Times*: seizure of paper," stated:

In taking this action the Government are of course acting entirely within their emergency powers; but the matter raises afresh the question, to which no clear answer has yet been given by Ministers in the House of Commons, whether their policy is to encourage or to hamper, and possibly even to prevent, the production of the regular independent newspapers of the country. Mr. Churchill, who is in charge of *The British Gazette*, stated on Monday that "in the twinkling of an eye the newspaper Press

went completely out of action " a week ago. It becomes necessary to state, therefore, in the interests of accuracy, that *The Times* has at no time been out of action, that its circulation has been steadily increased throughout the last week, and that the number of copies actually sold (and not merely printed) yesterday morning was more than 50 per cent. greater than the normal average maintained before the general strike began.

The *British Gazette* itself wrote on the " triumph of the Press," and showed how papers in London and all over the country had met with increasing success in supplying the public with news. The *Gazette* could hardly expect, and certainly did not receive, any reciprocal tributes from journalists. Official propaganda is always suspect, and the *Gazette* had its full share of criticism and derision. In the House of Commons a member asked if it was a White Paper or a Newspaper, and there was a burst of laughter when the speaker replied that " he supposed it was a newspaper." Low had a cartoon showing Mr. Churchill smoking a huge cigar, with a laurel wreath on his head, and saying " It's your paper I want." I have preserved copies of most issues of the paper, and, looking through them, must admit that some effort was made to give a fair show to the T.U.C. news. But it was a very poor alternative to the regular newspaper. Its swan song appeared in the final issue of May 13, and it described its own work as " an unexampled achievement in journalism," " one of the most signal exploits and adventures in the annals of English journalism." With the latter claim one does not quarrel.

The story showed how Mr. Churchill called to the Treasury on the first Monday the representatives of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association and the Newspaper Society, but failed to obtain their agreement to the production of a common emergency news sheet. Then came the offer of the editor of the *Morning Post* to co-operate in publishing a four-page bulletin paper, and suggesting that if needs be the Government should commandeer some big newspaper office (that of the *Morning Post* or another) and order so many papers to be produced. Late that night Mr. Churchill, Sir Samuel Hoare and a train of officials marched into the editorial sanctum of the *Morning Post* and carried out the suggestion. Sir Malcolm Fraser took charge for the Government. The compositors continued work until they had set five columns of matter, and then they were directed by their union, the L.S.C., to stop. Help was sought outside. Lord Beaverbrook lent the services of Mr. Sydney W. H. Long, without whom, said the writer, " the situation could not have been saved." He was the technical expert in charge of the *Daily Express ;* and having been a linotype operator, he contrived to set the remainder

of the 14 columns comprised in the first number, except a little arriving from the Stationery Office. The foundry fell to the chief stereotyper of the *Daily Mail*, sent along by Sir Andrew Caird. The machine room was a big difficulty, but some inexpert labour, including editorial men in dungarees, was initiated. By six o'clock in the morning over 230,000 copies had come from the presses. Mr. Churchill was constrained to make some sort of apology for the faults of his progeny in the Commons, and what journalists in general thought of it was vigorously expressed in the *New Statesman* of May 15, 1926:

> One of the worst outrages which the country had to endure—and to pay for—in the course of the strike, was the publication of the *British Gazette*. This organ, throughout the seven days of its existence, was a disgrace alike to the British Government and to British journalism, in so far as British journalism can be said to have had anything to do with it. It made no pretence of impartiality; it exaggerated, distorted or suppressed news, speeches and opinions for propagandist purposes. It was full of solecisms, half-truths and trivialities. It was supposed to be supporting the authority of Parliament, but it gave us nothing worth calling a report of the proceedings either of the House of Commons or of the House of Lords. For that we had to go to *The Times*. It was, in fact, the most incompetently edited paper we have ever seen, and we cannot wonder that even journalists who were in full sympathy with the Government's attitude, should have refused to serve under Mr. Churchill in producing such stuff. It boasted in its final issue of its gigantic circulation, but it did not say that this was largely achieved by the pushing of unsolicited copies into our letter boxes. Moreover, the offence of its appearance was aggravated by its wholesale commandeerng of newsprint. It was scandalous that *The Times* should have been deprived of its paper supplies in order to enable Mr. Churchill to poison public opinion. We can only offer our gratitude and our congratulations to *The Times* for the struggle which it made in face of this robbery, and for the way in which it selected the comparatively small amount of news it was able to print, and maintained its best traditions of truthfulness and impartiality.

To complete the record of the facts, the end of the struggle came on Wednesday, May 12, when the General Council of the T.U.C. went to the Prime Minister, and without discussion, told him that the General Strike was being terminated that day. In the Commons that evening Mr. Baldwin announced that he would at once resume negotiations in the coal dispute. Next day the public learned that Sir Herbert Samuel, chairman of the Coal Commission, had had conversations, unofficially and without any authority from the Government, with the General Council, who announced that they had thereby reached the conclusion "that a satisfactory basis of settlement in the mining industry can now be formulated." Sir Herbert Samuel, on his own initiative, had prepared a memorandum on proposals for a settlement which he promised to urge on the Government when negotiations were resumed. Thursday was a day of confusion

throughout industry, but pacification came in earnest next day and settlements were rapidly made on all hands.

The vital importance of the Press in the crisis needed no emphasis, but various official notices bore witness to it. On May 6 the *British Gazette* contained the following in a bold "cut off," headed "Notice to Printing Trade. Official":

When the present General Strike is ended, His Majesty's Government will take effectual measures to prevent the victimization by trade unions of any man who remains at work or who may return to work; and no settlement will be agreed to by His Majesty's Government which does not provide for this for a lasting period and for its enforcement, if necessary, by penalties. No man who does his duty loyally to the country in the present crisis will be left unprotected by the State from subsequent reprisals.

The printers were, of course, on strike, but the journalists were not, and they were under pressure to do the work of men who were out. Amid clashing loyalties many wavered, and this Government promise gave, as it was intended to give, assurance to many. On May 11 additional guarantees were officially given "to all workers in all trades," in the following statement signed by the Prime Minister:

Every man who does his duty by the country and remains at work or returns to work during the present crisis will be protected by the State from loss of trade union benefits, superannuation allowances or pensions. The Government will take whatever steps are necessary, whether Parliamentary or otherwise, for this purpose.

Now let us turn to the N.U.J. specifically and see how it fared in this strange national upheaval, after a digression which may be pardoned on account of its general interest to newspaper men. Grave problems of policy, fraught with the welfare and indeed, the safety of the Union, presented themselves on that fateful day, May 3, to the General Secretary (H. M. Richardson) and the small band of Executive men whom he could gather round him. No meeting of the full Executive was possible, owing to transport difficulties. Decisions had to be made by the Emergency Committee, and the Finance, Consultative and Propaganda Committee, and by a part only of these, for distant members could not get to London. The full membership of these sub-committees of the N.E.C. was as follows: Emergency Committee: A. J. Rhodes (President), Plymouth; H. A. Raybould (Vice-President), Dudley; T. Foster (Hon. Gen. Treasurer), Central London; J. Haslam (editor of the *Journalist*), Manchester; D. Lewis, South Wales; H. D. Nichols, Manchester; H. Stebbings, Reading; T. S. Dickson, Glasgow; W. Meakin, Central London. F.C.P. Committee: Rhodes, Raybould, Foster, Meakin, F. J. Mansfield (Central London),

H. T. Hamson (Uxbridge) and J. Hayward (Central London).

On the night of May 3 the following telegram was sent to all branches: "Union members are not on strike; are not called upon to abandon normal duties. Executive instructs members not to do work of other departments, nor their own work if non-Union labour is introduced in other departments for producing newspapers or substitutes."

On May 4 Richardson sent the following letter to branch secretaries:

I am instructed by the National Executive Council to inform you that the resolution which was telegraphed to you is to be interpreted so far as makeshift papers are concerned as follows:

1. That members are not to assist in any way in the preparation of makeshift papers either by supplying copy or otherwise, since the assumption must be that any substitute for print means that those who do it are blacklegging the compositors or other workers who have been called out.

2. Members should not supply copy to be sent out to be printed in non-union houses when the compositors who normally set their copy are out.

3. Directors, Editors, Managers or others who are usually in or about an office are not to be supplied with copy if they attempt to set type.

4. Where T.A. men have been called out and some obey and others refuse and remain at work our members should refuse to supply copy, and the same applies to mixed offices where the unionists are out and the non-unionists remain in.

5. In no event are members of the Union to hand in notices or go on strike. If they refuse to do work in accordance with the above instructions it lies with their employers to take what action they think fit.

6. Members are to continue at work—that is to say, reporters to get news and write it up, and sub-editors to prepare it for the press, but in the event of their work being dealt with contrary to these instructions the above instructions apply.

7. Where members are thrown out of work through obeying these instructions they will be treated as victims and paid in accordance with Rule 10 (*c*). Such members should report immediately to their branch secretaries and to the head office of the Union.

8. When a settlement of the general trouble is made our members who have been victimised will be re-instated with the other workers.

9. Members who disobey these instructions will be liable to disciplinary action by the Union, and may moreover find that trade unionists against whose trade union interests they have worked will be reluctant to allow them to continue. The Executive Council trusts that members will give loyal support to the policy which has been carefully thought out and which in its opinion is the wisest from the Union point of view immediately and ultimately.

10. Information from London and the Provinces shows that the Executive Council is strongly supported in its decision and in making it known.

11. It is, of course, a critical time for our Union, but if members obey the instructions the Union will emerge stronger than ever.

Questions arose as to the position of Agency staffs, and on May 5 Richardson wrote to branches:

The Emergency Committee of the N.E.C. takes the view that Agency men are merely continuing their ordinary work. They never know whether their copy is printed by unionists or non-unionists. If, however,

the press telegraphists or the postal telegraphists were called out, our Agency men are instructed not to supply copy for transmission by non-unionists brought in in place of the operators out.

P. & K.T.F. and makeshift papers.—Members should be informed that the Executive of the P. & K.T. Federation takes the view that makeshift papers of any sort can be produced only by blackleg labour. At our A.D.M., it will be remembered, a resolution on the question was withdrawn on the understanding that the present rules of the P. & K.T.F. were sufficient to cover such a case.

A terrific rumpus spread among the branches, and news of conflicting decisions was sent out almost hourly by the Agencies to the Press at large. Friends of the Union were dismayed: enemies rejoiced. To cite a few instances—the Leeds branch deplored the action of Natsopa in holding up the publication of the *Daily Mail* and other papers, refused to recognise the General Strike as constitutional, held that N.U.J. members were free to exercise their own discretion in the dispute, but pledged itself to protect as far as possible any members who refused to carry out duties other than those of their own profession. N.U.J. members in the London office of the *Yorkshire Post* protested against "the action of the Executive in supporting the tyrannical and unconstitutional action of the Natsopas." The N.E.C. had done nothing of the sort, but all sorts of wild notions prevailed in those frantic days. Glasgow stood loyal to Executive instructions. The Parliamentary Branch declared for the freedom of the Press, and was publicly congratulated by the Institute. Dundee repudiated the N.E.C. instructions and Edinburgh claimed complete liberty of action for all members. Wolverhampton supported the Executive, but Nottingham refused to recognise the original order to withdraw services if non-Union labour was introduced to bring out make-shift papers. The Union Head Office was flooded with protests and inquiries, and on May 6 Richardson telegraphed to the full Executive: "London Executive members in almost constant session with me. Am wiring branches for views to-night. Will wire or write you to-morrow." On May 7 came the wire: "Following sent to branches to-day: 'Executive advises members before refusing to do work for makeshift papers to inform General Secretary of all the facts.' Letter following. Richardson." The letter to all branches was as follows:

May 7, 1926.

You will have received the telegram instructing members before refusing to do work for makeshift papers to inform Head Office of all the facts. I am directed to say that the Executive Emergency Committee takes the view that in the special circumstances, the production of makeshift papers of a certain kind is permissible, so long as the people who produce them cannot permanently displace the mechanical workers who are on strike.

In view of misleading statements, the E.C. wishes it to be clearly understood that no instructions to strike have been issued, or were ever contemplated. The purpose of the Emergency Committee instructions (of May 3) is to secure conformity with the spirit of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, to which we have become affiliated by ballot vote, and to which we owe so much. It is the intention of the N.E.C. to call a Special Delegate Meeting as soon as the present trouble is at an end.

In addition, Richardson sent out to the National Executive Council a full story of events to date. It was marked "strictly confidential to the N.E.C.," but may now be printed:

May 7, 1926.

I am taking the first opportunity of reporting to you the progress of the trouble so far as it affects the Union. On Saturday last, when the T.U.C. decided to call out the printers and newspaper workers, it was evident that we should become involved. An effort was being made to get the T.U.C. to withdraw the order, as in the opinion of some of the printing unions, it would have been in the interests of the trade union movement that news should be given. This effort failed. I attended a meeting of the P. & K.T.F. Executive on Monday afternoon. All the other Unions represented there had instructed their members to cease work. I explained our position, and said that as we were not affiliated to the T.U.C., we had no intention of calling out our members. The other Unions appreciated that position. I asked whether they would look upon the production of makeshift papers as blacklegging. No resolution was passed on the point, but it was obvious that the other Unions would look upon such work as being anti-trade union and contrary to the spirit of the Federation.

Early in the morning, I had wired to all members of the Emergency and F.C.P. Committees asking them to attend a meeting that evening, or, if they could not do so, to wire whether they approved of members being instructed in accordance with Federation rules. The members who were not able to attend wired or 'phoned agreement to that course except Mr. Mansfield. One member was in favour of members being called out if the P. & K.T.F. desired such a course. There were present at the meeting the President and Messrs. Foster, Hamson, Hayward and Stebbings. The decision to issue the instruction, which was wired that night (May 3), was unanimous. We took the view that it was imperative that the instruction be issued, and that an instruction to carry on in any circumstances would be in opposition to the spirit of the A.D.M., would make our position in the Federation impossible, and would split the Union from top to bottom. We recognised that the instruction agreed upon would not please everyone. Apart from every other consideration, we considered it the only possible instruction to issue.

So many questions of interpretation arose during the following day (May 4) that a meeting was held that evening. Present, Messrs. Foster, Hayward, Meakin and the Secretary. It was then decided to issue the fuller instructions and send them by post. During Wednesday it began to become apparent that great pressure was being brought upon members in all parts of the country to disobey the instructions, but our members, generally speaking, were standing by the N.E.C. At Elgin, three members were locked out for refusing to work with blackleg comps.; at Aberdeen all were locked out for refusing to work duplicator paper; at Wolverhampton the *Express and Star* men went out rather than supply copy to non-union girls brought in to work for Gestetner duplicators. Up to Wednesday night, our information showed that the instruction was generally being observed. But on Wednesday evening a message was received showing that usual or strike editions were published in the following provincial centres that day: Aberdeen, Barrow, Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Bishop Auckland, Blackburn, Bolton, Bournemouth, Bradford, Bristol, Burton, Cardiff, Cheltenham, Darlington, Dublin,

Glasgow, Edinburgh, Gloucester, Grimsby, Halifax, Huddersfield, Hull, Kettering, Leeds, Leicester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Newport, Northampton, North Shields, Norwich, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Preston, Scarborough, Stockport, Sunderland, Swansea, Swindon, West Hartlepool, Wolverhampton, York. A meeting of the Committee (Foster, Meakin, Hayward and the Secretary present) was held that evening, and it was decided to wire all branches asking whether they had received instructions and what was the attitude of branches towards them.

The Emergency Committee (present, Meakin, in the chair, Foster, Hayward, Hamson, Stebbings, and the Secretary) met on Thursday (May 6). In view of the new position revealed by the replies received, the Committee decided after two hours discussion that the instruction should be amended to permit the production of makeshift papers by labour which could not permanently displace men on dispute. This was wired this morning to all branches and they were also written to. [The branch replies showed 25 for the Executive, 31 against, and 33 doubtful.] . . .

It is impossible at present to say how many of our members have been victimised for obeying the instruction. The Emergency Committee has decided to pay victimisation pay as follows: members whose salaries are not more than £2, the full amount; members earning more than £2 a week, two-thirds of their salary, with a minimum of £2 a week. In some cases members have been locked out by the closing of offices. They have not been victimised and will be paid ordinary benefit. The President (A. J. Rhodes) informs me that in his branch members are disobeying the instruction, but that he will stand by it, no matter what the consequences.

As I am mentioned by name in the foregoing as the sole exception to the decision of May 3 a personal explanation may be given. Like many of my fellow members I was opposed to any identification of the Union with the General Strike, but had many misgivings on the anxious question of how far loyalty to other unions should be allowed to carry us. I realised to the full the burden of responsibility weighing on my Executive colleagues and regretted my inability to leave my office to participate in the emergency meetings. On the morning of May 3 Richardson wired asking me to telephone him. I did so, and we had a candid talk on the issue. The pith of my statement was that we must not break our contracts with employers, but carry on. This I put into writing in a letter which Richardson, in a hasty note, promised to put before the Committee:

Times Office, May 3, 1926.

Dear Richardson,—Following our telephone conversation to-day, my views as a trustee of the Union of our duty in the present crisis are as follows: (1) Journalists are bound to fulfil their contracts of service and continue doing their normal work. I have always regarded this as a bedrock principle. We fight in the Courts for the observance of contracts by the other side, and we are bound in honour to observe the same standard of conduct. The fact that other classes of labour break contracts in striking is no warrant for our doing the same. (2) If any effort is made by newspaper proprietors to produce news sheets by alternative methods of production, such as photography or typewriting or duplication, that would not appear to me to be a reason for journalists withholding their ordinary labour. Such methods could not be regarded as blacklegging compositors and machine men. (3) I hear that the London proprietors have decided not to attempt to produce papers. If this is true the N.U.J.

will not be involved in the dispute. (4) Anything like a general strike of the N.U.J. (which, of course, does not arise in the present situation) would exhaust the funds of the Union in a very short time, and would, I fear, hopelessly divide and shatter the membership. Will you kindly place these views before the Emergency Committee, whose meeting I regret I am unable to attend, owing to pressure of duties here.—F.J.M.

On the day the strike ended, May 12, Richardson issued to the branches a detailed statement of the reasons which led the Emergency Committee to send out the instructions dated May 3 and May 7. In a covering letter he said:

The position from the Union point of view grows worse. The Aberdeen branch, which had held out against blacklegging since the strike started was yesterday (May 11) told that in future the paper was to be run by non-union labour, and they were given the opportunity to return before six o'clock last evening or permanently lose their jobs. All the men, with the exception of —— and two or three others, surrendered. We are paying victimisation benefit to members at Aberdeen, Reading, Lincoln, St. Albans, and Streatham (London). In London the *Daily Chronicle, Daily News, Star, Mirror, Times, Telegraph, Mail, Morning Post, Standard,* are producing papers and our members are generally working. A few have refused.

P.S.—Since writing the above, the Strike has been cancelled.

The enclosed statement was as follows:

I am asked by the Emergency Committee of the N.E.C. to place before branches a statement of the reasons which led to the instructions dated May 3 and May 7 being issued to members in connection with the stoppage in the printing industry. From branch resolutions received, it is evident that the committee is being criticised on the following grounds: (1) That the N.E.C. should have called a general strike of members; (2) That no instructions should have been issued; (3) That the instruction should have been to "carry on" whether work was done with non-union labour or not; (4) That the instruction should have been confined to Clause 3, Rule VII. of the P. & K.T.F. rules instead of being based upon Clauses 3 and 4.

These clauses read as follows: Clause 3: No assistance shall be rendered during a dispute by any member or members of a federated union to an employer by the execution of other than their usual work. Clause 4: In the event of non-union labour being introduced to take the places of members out in dispute, the executives of those unions not already affected by the dispute shall be requested to withdraw their members, provided always that such dispute has been reported to and supported by the Executive Committee of the Federation.

(5) That the instruction of May 7 altered the whole Union attitude, and that it was contrary to the whole spirit of the P. & K.T.F.

No. (1) can be dismissed with the statement that even if the E.C. had desired to do so, it had no authority. As to No. (2), the appeals for advice and instruction received on May 3 made it imperative that a general instruction should be issued. Objections to Nos. (3) and (4) can be dealt with together. The Committee, having decided that an instruction was essential, had to determine what instruction would be most in accordance with trade union spirit and custom and least likely permanently to injure the Union in its task of defending and promoting the interests of members in reference to salaries and conditions of employment. The Committee was fully conscious of the difficulties of its task and the dangers to unity that would accrue, no matter what instruction was issued. Some members of the Union would want to strike with other workers; some would want to carry on as usual; others would want to do any sort of work, since they would believe that the interests of the country would best be served by the publication of news.

The Committee was faced with problems of principle and problems of expediency. Owing to short notice and the fact that members would not be able to return to their homes, attendance at the meeting was small. But during the day, telegrams and telephone messages had been received from members of the Emergency and the F.C.P. Committees clearly indicating that the whole of the members, with one exception, were anxious that any decision taken should be one which would not ultimately alienate us from the unions in the newspaper industry. The Committee sat for nearly three hours, discussing the question from every point of view. It was agreed that it would be better to lose the membership of a great many and still retain the friendship of the other unions, rather than lose the membership of perhaps a smaller number (of the more staunch trade unions) and also the friendship of the other unions. We thought that the T.U.C. had been unwise to call out the printers, but they had called them out, and there was no alternative course for a trade union than to instruct its members not to blackleg and not to assist blacklegs. We felt that even if that instruction was disobeyed by a considerable number, it would still leave us with the support of the convinced trade unionists in our own ranks and with the ability to ask for the support of the other unions should we ever want it. I had informed the members of the Federation Executive of our position as a Union not affiliated to the T.U.C. It was obvious that the other unions would not expect us to blackleg or assist blacklegs. Needless to say, I did not suggest that any of our members would dream of disregarding such an elementary, essential and fundamental point of trade union principle.

After long discussion, the Emergency Committee decided to wire the instruction which read: "Union members are not on strike; are not called upon to abandon normal duties. Executive instructs members not to do work of other departments, nor their own work if non-union labour is introduced in other departments for producing newspapers or substitutes." This instruction was based upon a realisation of our obligations to the federated unions, to which we were pledged to give support in accordance with the rules and constitution of the Federation. But even apart from that consideration, the members present felt that as trade unionists they could not do less than issue an instruction against black legging and one which at the same time would make it clear to our members that they were not to take part in the General Strike. . . . It was well received by most of the branches the following day and was acted upon by many men who were asked to assist with makeshift papers. At Aberdeen, Elgin, Glasgow, Wolverhampton, Swindon, Hull, Reading, Streatham, members were victimised for obeying the instruction.

By Wednesday night, however, there had been a serious change. Information received at Head Office showed that many members throughout the country had been influenced by the wireless news of a repudiation by one or two branches. It became evident that, unless some accommodation could be made to meet the case of men who were torn between loyalty to their papers and to the public interest, there would be many resignations. Faced with this fact, the Emergency Committee on the night of May 6 decided (with one dissentient) to instruct members that they were not to refuse to supply copy for makeshift papers of a certain kind until they had consulted Head Office; and I was instructed to inform enquiring members that it would be permissible to work only on makeshift papers produced by duplicators. Members resolutely refusing to do so would still be paid benefit. We felt that if we could limit the activities of members to sheets of that description, they would not be helping blacklegs in the narrow sense of men doing the work of men on strike.

The Committee came to this decision very reluctantly, recognising that it was in opposition to the strict interpretation of the unwritten rules of trade unionism. The pressure brought to bear and the arguments put forward in favour of the concession were very formidable. Unfortunately many members interpreted the amended instruction as one to do as they pleased. Instead of consulting Head Office as to the meaning they

began to supply copy to any compositor so long as they were assured that he would not permanently displace a man who was out. The Committee never for a moment intended that to be done. Throughout the crisis the Emergency Committee has acted to the best of its ability solely in the permanent interests of the N.U.J. and with the purpose of maintaining unity for the effective prosecution of the Union's work in the future.

If the P. & K.T.F. had no part in the strike, it played a valuable part in the making of peace. To it was entrusted negotiation for the whole industry.

On May 27 an agreement was signed between the Federation of Master Printers of Great Britain and Ireland, the Newspaper Society, the Master Bookbinders' Association and the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation.

The N.U.J. was, of course, among the unions standing as parties to the Federation agreement. It was agreed, *inter alia*, that the Agreements between the parties which were in existence previous to May 1, 1926, should remain in force; the employers' organisations would recommend their members to give preference in engagement to former employees who left their work during the General Strike as and when required; there should be no lightning or sudden stoppage of work of any kind in the works of any member of the employers' organisations; the trade unions agreed that there should be no interference with the contents of any newspaper, periodical or other matter printed or published by members of the employers' organisations; no Chapel meetings to be held during working hours.

The parties also pledged themselves to prevent any stoppage of work or interference with work, in consequence of a dispute or any question arising in or out of the trade, without first exhausting all the possibilities of the J.I.C. conciliation machinery before the customary notice was given by either side. Another clause laid down: "strict observance of agreements in the printing and kindred trades shall be regarded as a matter of honour affecting each individual employer and employee."

A separate agreement was made between the N.P.A. (London newspapers) and the London Unions, including the N.U.J. The points of it were:

(*a*) No interference with the contents of newspapers owned by members of the N.P.A.; (*b*) no interference with or victimisation of any members of the staffs who worked or returned to work during the strike, either in their own or in another office; nor shall there be any victimisation by the employers; (*c*) no interference by members of the unions with the management of businesses, or with the right of the management to employ, promote, or discharge members of the staffs, nor shall it be necessary for private secretaries or managers of departments not engaged in production to be members of a union; (*d*) no Chapel meetings shall be held during working hours; (*e*) strict observance of agreements in the newspaper trades shall be regarded as a matter of honour affecting each individual employer and employee.

In giving the above the *Journalist* appended the explanation: The value of this agreement to the N.U.J. is that it prevents the victimisation of any member of the Union. Clause (*c*) does not give the employers the right to employ non-union labour in departments customarily trade union. There is nothing new in Clause (*d*). It is understood that there is no objection to chapel meetings being held in working hours so long as such meetings do not interrupt the production of papers.

A full meeting of the Union Executive, specially convened, was held in London on May 30, as promptly as possible after the termination of the Strike. The formal minute in the typewritten folio from Union archives does not convey the sense of crisis which pervaded the proceedings, but memory stirs the embers, and these brief records glow like sparks from an anvil when the hammered metal is at white heat. Two resignations of Scottish members of the N.E.C. were accepted with regret, and J. H. Aitken, who had been elected by the Glasgow Branch, took the place of one. On the matters arising immediately out of the General Strike the division of opinion is shown by the voting figures, but on what was the main moral issue—the original decisions of the Emergency Committee and their basis—there was an emphatic majority of endorsement of the course taken. Here are the relevant minutes in their full text:

Dispute in Printing Trades.—After discussion on the situation created by the General Strike, H D. Nichols moved and W. Betts seconded the following motion: "The Executive endorses the view on which the Emergency Committee acted, that, for the purpose of the interpretation of our rules and any action necessary under them, there was in existence a trade dispute in which the printing unions were involved from midnight on Monday, May 3." Carried by 17 votes to 7.

Record of Dissent.—F. J. Mansfield, as a trustee of the Union, dissented from the resolution, and said he could not hold himself responsible for the dispensation of the funds based on the resolution.

Endorsement of the Emergency Committee.—J. Haslam then moved and H. T. Hamson seconded the following motion: "The Executive recognises the extreme and unprecedented difficulty in which the Emergency Committee had to act, and in view of our affiliation to the P. & K.T.F., we approve the conclusions at which they arrived; and further, the N.E.C. considers that in issuing their first instruction, they took the only course open to them in the circumstances." H. D. Nichols proposed an amendment, seconded by J. M. Fraser, to take out the words "and in view of our affiliation to the P. & K.T.F." and substitute "in view of our obligations as a trade union." The amendment was carried by 12 votes to 11. Foster moved, as a further amendment, and D. Lewis seconded, to delete all after "Executive" in line 1, and substitute "is of opinion that the Emergency Committee in issuing their first instruction took the only possible course in view of our obligations as a trade union." This was carried by 20 votes to 4, and on being put as the substantive motion, was adopted without dissent.

P. & K.T.F. affiliation.—H. D. Nichols moved the following motion, seconded by H. Stebbings: "This N.E.C., having considered communications from several branches on the subject of affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. re-affirms its opinion that continued affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. is essential to the strength and progress of the N.U.J." This was carried by 17 votes to 1. On the suggestion of W. G. Mitchell, it was agreed that Foster and the General Secretary should prepare a statement of benefits derived from affiliation to the P. & K.T.F.

Victimisation Pay.—H. D. Nichols moved, and Stebbings seconded "that full salary be paid to victimised members retrospectively." Agreed. It was agreed that no victimisation pay should be sent to those members who returned to their offices before the end of the dispute and had ceased to be members of the Union.

Locked out members.—It was agreed that the General Secretary should write to the employers of members locked out, claiming payment of salary.

Terms of Settlement.—It was agreed, on the motion of Foster, that the terms of settlement with the newspaper proprietors should be published in the *Journalist*, with a note by the General Secretary explaining why the Union was a party to it. The agreements with the N.P.A. and the Newspaper Society were approved.

The historian must not abuse the liberty of personal explanation, but as my name figures prominently in the above record a little elaboration is called for, and is justified by the fact that the principles on which I acted were shared by a large body of opinion in the Union. After the Executive meeting I sent the following letter to the General Secretary:

4th June, 1926.

I feel, after the decision of the N.E.C., on the action taken by the Emergency Committee on May 3, that I have no alternative but to resign my position as a Trustee of the Union. As you know, before the Emergency Committee met on May 3, I sent you in writing my contention that our members must carry out their contracts of service. When the matter was discussed by the N.E.C., last Sunday, I urged the view that the instruction issued on May 3 was not warranted by our Rule 10. The N.E.C. decided contrariwise, and I feel therefore that my position as a trustee has become untenable. I shall be glad if you will accept my resignation as operative from this date.

In reply Richardson quite reasonably asked me to continue in office until the Special Delegate Meeting to be summoned for July. He added that as I had recognised the difficulties the Emergency Committee was in, and in view of the efforts in several branches to wreck the Union, he hoped I would reconsider a step which would inevitably be considered as being hostile to the N.E.C. "You have refrained from criticising it," he urged, "and yet the step you are now taking would be more detrimental to the Union than any amount of criticism inside the Union itself." This was a strong appeal. Moreover I realised that a trusteeship could not be relinquished abruptly. After much cogitation I decided to remain a trustee, and leave the future to be determined by the development of Union policy. To anticipate events, when the troubled seas calmed the old loyalty conquered and I am still a trustee. Being by nature a cautious man I ascertained the legal position. I inquired if the instructions issued on May 3 and 7 were a proper exercise of powers under our Rule 10 (*b*); if not, were victimisation payments legal, and as our funds were held in a fiduciary capacity, what was the liability of a trustee with regard to such payments; where a trustee protested that N.E.C. action was *ultra vires* but the majority decided to the contrary, was the trustee liable if illegal payments were held to have been made, and if so how could such

a trustee vindicate his position? These questions may provoke a smile so long after the event, but they were tremendously serious at a time when I was endeavouring to find a way of justifying to my conscience my retention of office. The legal reply was that I was a trustee of the Union's invested funds and until those funds were involved I was not responsible for the payments in question.

In this survey I am most anxious to do full justice to the Emergency Committee. One has to take account of deep-rooted feelings not revealed in the recital of bare facts, and very many of those who doubted the rightness of the course taken themselves felt the force of those instincts, though they were bound to obey principles of action which overruled the feelings. Probably the dominating impulses which influenced the emergency policy were (1) a sense of wrong to down-trodden miners; (2) a strong sense of unity and comradeship—the Englishman's ideal of "playing the game."

There was much argument on the vexed "dispute" question. Some were convinced by the speech of Sir John Simon in the House as to the illegality of the strike; against this the N.E.C. issued the salient sections of the Trade Disputes Act 1906. It is impossible here to enter into this argument, but I recall that a judgment given in the High Court on May 11 by Mr. Justice Astbury seemed definitive to many of us. The decision in the case was that no trade dispute had been alleged or shown to exist in any of the unions affected by the strike, except in the case of the miners, and no trade dispute did, or could, exist between the T.U.C. on the one hand and the Government and the nation on the other. No trade unionist, it was held, could lose his trade union benefits by refusing to obey unlawful orders. Apart from these legal subtleties it seemed to a large section of our membership that the plain fact was that neither the P. & K.T.F., nor the N.U.J., had a "dispute" in any sense in which that word had hitherto been understood. Thus, if our members had been told that in committing themselves to affiliations to other unions they might be expected to support fellow unionists in disputes, say in the mining or cotton industries, it would have strained trade union loyalty to breaking point. However, that particular controversy of 1926 is dead. Let it rest, and may it never be resuscitated, for the peace and safety of the N.U.J.

But the unhappy story is not yet complete. The General Strike left the Union in a state of turmoil and contention. Many branches were in revolt, and there was general bewilderment and

apprehension. Some branches had so far forgotten their primary duty in the excitement as to broadcast decisions which should have been treated as confidential Union business. The bigger branches took to circularising their views throughout the Union. Two or three cases may be cited. They display a contrast not without interest to the student of ethnology. Meeting during the strike, Manchester showed its steadiness. It unanimously expressed the view that members who assisted in the production of substitute newspapers of the type being published in its own area, were acting in the best interests of the community, the profession and the Union; and advised members to continue their normal duties, but in no circumstances to accept work in the composing room or any department other than their own. South Wales, meeting on May 15, emphatically protested against the first instruction issued by the Emergency Committee, on the grounds (1) that it was a breach of Union rules, as action could only be taken in a dispute in the trades represented in the P. & K.T.F.; (2) that it was in defiance of the Union's decision to sever connection with the T.U.C.; and (3) that it was calculated to produce discord by introducing contentious matters, political and otherwise, which were outside the province of the Union. The Branch therefore "censured" those responsible for the issue of the instructions, and called for the election of persons of experience who would observe the rules and act consistently with the objects of the Union, the interests of its members and the public standing and responsibilities of the journalistic profession. The Branch meeting declared that it had ceased to have any confidence in the General Secretary and called for his resignation.

Central London took a constructive line in urging that the interests of the Union could best be served by members sinking their differences. Foster, in a fine fighting speech, said he was proud to have been associated with Executive colleagues who did not shirk their plain trade union duty in a time of temptation. If members feared their obligations when they joined a trade union they should have gone instead into an alleged trade union, which had instructed its members to do anything and afterwards gloried in the fact that its members had seized their opportunity for indiscriminate blacklegging. John Hayward, chairman of the branch, with dramatic effect on a crowded meeting, denounced members who allowed their Executive to do all the fighting and take all the risks and then ran away when confronted by a plain duty. This was neither trade unionism nor comradeship. There

was a painful surprise when three prominent branch officials resigned office in protest against the disobedience to Executive instructions. Hayward resigned the chairmanship. Foster, not less angry but looking ahead to the task of restoration, agreed to succeed him, and so became branch chairman for the third time. Several communications from branches and office staffs were read at the Central London meeting. The Parliamentary Branch protested against the instructions issued, and flatly declared that it had no intention to comply with them. The *Daily Mirror* men declared that the instruction was equivalent to an order to strike, which in the absence of a ballot was unconstitutional, and they decided not to obey it. The *Westminster Gazette* chapel contended that the instruction was contrary to Union rules, there being no " dispute " in progress; they disregarded the order, asked the management to publish an emergency sheet and offered to do their best to help.

The grand inquest was in full session that May and June—if the term is appropriate to a dispute so lacking in judicial calm. If some of the more ardent spirits had had their way it would have been a court martial. The *Newspaper World* had many lively letters from both sides. One, signed by T. A. Davies as a former president of the Union, W. E. Pegg and W. Ellis Hughes as former members of the N.E.C., spoke of the illegal attempt to involve the N.U.J. in the General Strike, and declared that the decisions of the N.E.C. on May 30 were bitterly resented by a large body of members. In particular they repudiated the resolution stating that a " trade dispute " was in existence in which the printing unions were involved. The writers said that the P. &K.T.F. " had no right to call out its members." This misconception, to which I have already referred, appeared in several places for a time. The official attitude of the Federation was stated in its *Bulletin* for May, 1926, and may be placed on record here:

In the Sept., 1925, issue of this journal we referred to the discussions which had taken place at the immediately preceding Trades Union Congress held at Scarborough. The opinion then expressed was that the General Council were seeking " such powers as would subjugate the executive authority of all unions " to their control. The correctness of our views has been lamentably demonstrated. Whatever else the General Council may be able to run, it has proved a failure at conducting a general strike. The fact is that in giving support to the demands of the Miners' Federation, the Council too readily pledged the organised workers of the country to act upon their instructions. At the last moment, and when negotiations had apparently broken down, the Council had either to withdraw from the attitude they had adopted or to give effect to their threats. And the result was a general strike.

To avoid misunderstanding, it should be made clear that the unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress received strike instructions direct, and acted upon them as units. The early endeavours of the P. & K.T.F. to secure some cohesive policy amongst the unions of the printing and allied trades was unsuccessful, and the Federation had no part whatever in the strike. No consultation was made either by the General Council or by the printing unions with the Federation. As a fact, the Federation interests were suspended by our unions in favour of the affiliated interests in the Congress. The Federation did not and could not function under these conditions. Those employed in the printing industry are deeply concerned to know how and why a lockout in the mining industry could be helped by them being called out on strike. Those employed in other industries are probably asking the same question. But we doubt if even the General Council can satisfactorily make answer . . . a levy on trade unionists could have been made which would have enabled the miners to hold out for an honourable settlement without involving their wives and families, and our own in a tussle to maintain existence.

The unions in the printing industry were of the first to be instructed by the General Council to cease work. The response was immediate, and for the first time within living memory the community experienced existence without its very necessary supply of daily newspapers, as well as other printing . . . The Executive of the P. &K.T.F. by deputation urged upon the General Council to reconsider the decision to strike the country's newspapers. After the lapse of a week (May 10) the deputation again attended to press for a favourable decision, but to no purpose.

Accepting an offer of the editor, H. M. Richardson sent the *Newspaper World* a statement of Union policy during the strike, concluding thus :

It was inevitable that the general strike would cause some dissension in the N.U.J. . . Up to the present many journalists have not disciplined themselves sufficiently to accept an Executive decision without question, or without distrusting the men they have entrusted with the Union affairs. Hence the action of certain branches in repudiating the Executive Committee instruction. Of course capital of a sort will be made of such incidents by the enemies of the Union. Let it be clearly understood that the Union did not endorse the General Strike policy. It was no business of the Union as a union to consider that. It was the business of the Union as a trade union with obligations of honour to other allied trade unions to prevent so far as it could its members from acting in an anti-trade union spirit and in a way inimical to the interests of those other unions. The printers, the stereotypers, the machine-minders, the Natsopa would not blackleg journalists if they were on strike, no matter what the cause of the dispute might be. We could not do less than ask our members to do unto the others as we knew the others would do unto us if ever the occasion arose for them to do so. That is the sufficient and sole justification for the policy the Union Executive pursued during the eight days' demonstration.

The most prominent of the " enemies " was the Institute, with Mr. Peaker, ex-president, as its mouthpiece in its *Journal*. He wrote that members of the Institute were elated, and patting themselves on the back. " The Union has been split from top to bottom," and the Institute invited all the malcontents to join it. The writer himself was apparently so elated that he spoiled an article of about a thousand words by the use of his favourite phrase " crude trade unionism " no fewer than five times. The " split " in which he rejoiced proved to be only a temporary

phase. Richardson, admitting that the Union had been "dragged reluctantly" into the conflict, wrote that the Institute had attempted to make capital out of it and had got the *British Gazette* or the B.B.C. "to broadcast the fact that it at least was glad of the opportunity of showing that it never had sympathy with trade unionists, and that it was prepared to blackleg to the utmost extent if by so doing it could incidentally injure the N.U.J." Haslam, in his editorial in the *Journalist*, spoke of the "mess-up" in which the Union had been involved. He echoed the feelings of many of us in appealing for generosity and caution in the criticism of the small group of Executive men on whom the whole grave responsibility fell. It took those men three solid hours to decide on their course, and they could not have done less to maintain the substance of the affiliation to the P. & K.T.F., which was the decision of the whole Union. "If they did not weigh up the situation as some members think they ought, or would have liked them to do, they were at least consistent with the trade union position in which the Union had placed them, and there is no ground for recrimination or condemnation."

Stout trade unionist as he was Haslam frankly confessed that he was doubtful about joining the P. & K.T.F. at the first, thinking the Union was not ready for it. Then, when the first real test came, "groups of journalists in some centres rushed to employers and promised to do anything wanted of them." Reading this distressful cry from our worthy editor many of us felt that the Union was subjected to a test that was not fair and straightforward. The tragedy was, I argued in the *Journalist*, that masses of men in the newspaper and other industries, who had no grievances in their own employment, were called on to break their contracts and thus deal an unfair blow at their employers. Contractual obligations were mutual, "lightning strikes" were wrong in principle (though cases must be decided on their merits), and hence the new agreements banning sudden stoppages were to be welcomed.

July was a time of keen discussion of the issues set for decision at the Special Delegate Meeting called for the 25th of that month to deal solely with matters arising out of the General Strike. The *Journalist* was full of argument and appeal from the Union's ablest pens and voices. The President (A. J. Rhodes) called for unity and amity—"close the breaches and consolidate our position." H. D. Nichols, taking as his keynote the Central London appeal for the sinking of differences, argued that the root

of the trouble was that the Union had not defined with sufficient clarity the limits of its obligations as one of a group of associated unions. For the problem that faced the Emergency Committee there was no ideal solution. Meakin, in a defence of the Emergency Committee, revealed a fact interesting to the scalp hunters of the General Secretary. When the problem of the substitute papers confronted the Committee, Richardson emphasised that it would be extremely difficult for members not to write for such papers. But the other unions expected the N.U.J. to fulfil its obligations not to blackleg. After much heart-searching and weighing up of possibilities the Committee decided that the maintenance of good relations with the other unions, from which the N.U.J. had derived great economic advantages, was the dominant consideration. Then came the chaos in the branches. Glasgow, for instance, first endorsed the policy, but a large section of the Branch reversed it almost immediately. So the modified instructions came to be issued.

Another contributor, " Union loyalist; one who lost his job," wrote a whole page headed: " The pitiable collapse in Glasgow: men who left the firing line." He stated that the Branch had lost almost half its members, many of whom would still be in the Union but for wholesale victimisation by two Glasgow firms. Of the branch meetings reported in July, in which the clash of opinions was clearly exposed, that of Manchester deserves special attention because of its realistic grip. C. E. Turner (Trustee) proposed a resolution stating that the instructions issued in the name of the N.E.C. were " apparently conflicting and calculated to cause confusion in the ranks of members generally "; that the strike was not such a trade dispute in the newspaper and printing industry as was comprehended in P. & K.T.F. rules, and that the issue of instructions, which were in substance a call to withhold labour, was contrary to Union rules, to the Union's determination to dissociate from the T.U.C., and to the terms of the affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. This motion was carried, but only by the casting vote of the chairman. H. D. Nichols (N.E.C.) secured a three-fourths majority for a motion to be submitted to the Special Delegate Meeting, declaring for continued affiliation to the P. & K.T.F., but proceeding: " In view, however, of doubts which have arisen during the period of the recent General Strike, it finds it necessary to declare that the N.U.J. will not consider its members under any obligation to cease their normal journalistic duties when members of an affiliated union or unions may be

involved in a trade dispute in which printing trade interests are not directly concerned; nor will the Union consider its members under such an obligation if a strike should be declared by any of the affiliated unions, whether in the direct interest of members of the printing trade unions or otherwise, without due notice having been given to terminate contracts of employment." Possibly Nichols, by this skilfully drafted resolution, intended to banish the chance of any dilemma in the future such as that which led him, with his informed legal mind, to induce the Executive to adopt the strategic decision on the " dispute " question at its meeting on May 30.

The Special Delegate Meeting took place in London on July 25. Forty-six notices of motion had been sent in. These were sifted by the Standing Orders Committee, and specifically by H. D. Nichols, and reduced to the few essential to the discussion of general principles. It is not feasible here to report the eight hours discussion; decisions must suffice. The net result was a compromise which did not satisfy the toughest warriors in the battle, but was deftly directed to the softening of asperities, and the promotion of peace and harmony in the future. J. Robertson (Glasgow) moved and A. M. Diston (Trade and Periodical) seconded: " That this S.D.M. expresses its approval of the action taken by the Emergency Committee and its officers during the General Strike and desires to put on record its continued confidence in these officials." T. A. Davies (South Wales) moved and Hugh Martin (Parliamentary) seconded the amendment: " To delete all words after ' S.D.M.' and substitute ' is of opinion that the instructions issued by the Emergency Committee after the declaration of the recent General Strike were unwarranted, that they were not in accordance with the rules, and were contrary to the best interests of the N.U.J." For the amendment there voted 22, against 48—majority against 26. A. M. Lee (Huddersfield) then moved, and J. G. Gregson (N.E.C.) seconded on behalf of Carnarvonshire, the following further amendment: " To delete all words after ' S.D.M.' and substitute ' is of the opinion that in the unusual and unfortunate circumstances which prevailed at the commencement of the General Strike, the Emergency Committee was placed in a position of great difficulty, and could not, as subsequent events have proved, have issued instructions which would have been satisfactory to all the members of the Union; it is further of the opinion that the interests of the Union will best be served by members sinking any differences which have

arisen out of the instructions issued during the General Strike, and concentrating upon the means of avoiding similar difficulties in the future." This amendment was carried by 63 votes to 11, and when put as a substantive motion received 65 votes to nine against. On the motion of C. Hulin (North London) the addendum " this meeting desires to put on record its continued confidence in the Executive of the Union " was adopted by 73 votes to nine.

A debate followed on the motion submitted by Central London and Glasgow, moved by G. E. Middleton (Central London): " That this S.D.M. reaffirms the policy of the affiliation of the N.U.J. to the P. & K.T.F." T. S. Dickson (Glasgow) seconded, H. D. Nichols moved an amendment, in the names of Manchester, Bolton and other branches, recognising the necessity for continued affiliation, the value to the Union of the mutual obligations contracted by the federated unions, and then including the qualifying declaration given in the text above as the resolution of the Manchester Branch. An amendment suggested by C. P. Robertson (Central London) was, however, accepted by Manchester. It read: " That this S.D.M. decides to maintain the affiliation to the P. & K.T.F., and instructs the N.E.C. to present their report by the end of the year, after consulting the P. & K.T.F. as to the general conditions of affiliation." This was carried by 83 votes to 15. It followed a suggestion by Meakin that an approach should be made to the P. & K.T.F. on the possibility of modified terms of affiliation. Finally the conference agreed by 58 votes against 31 " that this S.D.M. instructs the N.E.C. to take a ballot of the members to ascertain their wishes for the future on the matter of affiliation to the P. & K.T.F., such a ballot to be taken immediately after the report of the result of the consultation with the Federation has been considered in connection with the branches." The N.E.C. was instructed to consider before the next A.D.M. " whether any further rules governing the relations between the N.E.C. and the Emergency Committee are necessary."

T. A. Davies withdrew the motion from South Wales asking for the resignation of the General Secretary, and the meeting, without a division, passed a resolution of confidence in that official, and expressing " its strong resentment of the entirely unjustified attacks which have been made upon him by a small minority of the Union's members." Three other resolutions were passed: (1) strongly disapproving of the action of certain branches and individual members in sending resolutions relating to Union

policy to the public Press and to the B.B.C.; (2) asking F. J. Mansfield to withdraw his resignation as a Trustee; (3) protesting against the action of some Scottish employers and regretting that they had not seen their way to take a conciliatory attitude similar to that taken by English employers. The conference ended with an appeal by the President to delegates to use their influence to persuade members who had talked of resigning to remain in the Union.

Much is lost by this bald official-minute style of record. One would like to picture the keen verbal duel between Davies and Richardson, which seemed to evoke the whole controversy in its pith and substance; to mention some illuminating utterances. Such as these: Haslam's dictum that in quick decisions in serious emergencies it was sometimes necessary even to break rules, for not always could rules stand in the way of progress (this aroused the ire of the Celts); two of Richardson's points — "A trade unionist employed in a trade union office did not break his contract of service if he refused to work with non-unionists who were introduced, and that principle had been accepted by the N.P.A."; "in future there would not be any lightning strikes unless they arose out of breaches of agreement on the part of employers." These are tempting by-paths, but I have to compress into a single chapter, albeit a long one, a subject big enough in itself for a whole book.

Two events related to the General Strike, however, demand treatment. One is the novel step taken by the *Manchester Guardian* and *Evening News* in the formation of a "House Society," a sort of office union; and the other, the Union's decision on continued affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. The account of the *Guardian* experiment is by C. E. Turner, a member of the staff of that paper, who in the writing of it has been able to consult colleagues having first-hand knowledge of what was for the N.U.J. a startling innovation. It will be found in Appendix III.

In September, 1926, after the S.D.M., a deputation from the N.E.C. had a frank and full discussion with the Executive of the P. & K.T.F. on the various misgivings among our members. The Federation sent a considered reply as to the liabilities of N.U.J. members in the event of any allied union being involved in a dispute. The N.E.C. issued the following summary and comment:

The points at issue may perhaps best be put in the form of the following question:—Would loyalty to the Federation ever be likely to involve our members in breaches of contract or customary agreement with their employers, either (1) By requiring them to strike without the varying customary notices of one, three, or six months having been given (or such other notice as might have been agreed by individual contract); or (2)

By requiring that they should refuse to work with non-union labour, brought in to break another union's strike, when the other union had itself struck in breach of agreement?

On both the issues raised in this question the Federation's ruling is explicit.

(1) It is made clear that in the event of the N.U.J. being requested to call its members out on strike in support of another union, there would, in no circumstances, be any obligation upon our Union or its individual members to give less than the recognised and customary notices to cease work. The rules of the Federation already ensure that no one union shall be called upon to strike in support of an allied union until all the circumstances of the original dispute have been reported to the affiliated unions, and have been considered by the Federation, and until—after this—the Federation has decided to support the union first involved. It is now made clear that the rules which lay these conditions down are to be interpreted in conjunction with the recent agreements with the employers, so that the Federation cannot support any union which has taken strike action in a dispute before all the possibilities of the conciliation machinery of the J.I.C. have been exhausted. It follows, therefore, that the Federation can only call upon the N.U.J. to strike in support of an allied union when that union has submitted its case to the J.I.C., and when conciliation has failed. By that time a period would have elapsed during which our Union would have become fully acquainted with the circumstances of the dispute. Our members would know that all the alternatives to strike had been exhausted in the original dispute, and that the first union involved had the support of the federated unions in striking. And although our members would still have to be balloted before striking, it may be presumed that under such circumstances they would recognise that loyalty to the Federation required them to assist their allied union in the dispute. They would not, however, be called upon to cease work after less than the customary notice under which they were employed.

(2) No union is to be regarded as being under any obligation, by virtue of its membership of the Federation, to refuse to work with imported labour when there is a dispute in which another union has broken the agreements recently made. Those agreements were made by the Federation itself, acting on behalf of all the affiliated unions, and it is put on record in the Federation's letter that they are to be regarded as binding the Federation as well as the unions. The Federation could not and would not require the N.U.J. to take any action in support of another union which was breaking them. It follows that the Federation will only regard our members as under an obligation to refuse to work with non-union labour brought in to break an allied union's strike, when that allied union has acted in accordance with the agreements with the employers. If another union, having a cause of dispute, satisfied the Federation that it has exhausted all the possibilities of the conciliation machinery of the J.I.C., and has then called its members out only after giving due notice, the Federation will recognise the strike, and expect the affiliated unions "to do as they would be done by" in a similar case. In such an event, and only in such an event, would the other unions be under an obligation, by virtue of their Federation membership, not to assist in defeating the union involved in the dispute by working with strike-breakers. That under certain conditions such an obligation might arise has always been implicit in our membership of the Federation. The effect of the Federation's considered reply to our deputation is to define those conditions with a precision which they have hitherto lacked.

The ballot on continued affiliation was taken in December, 1926, and on the back of the paper were two statements of equal length, one showing why affiliation was necessary (endorsed by the whole N.E.C. except two) and the other why it was harmful

(by the two dissentient members). The first emphasised the supreme value of the J.I.C. as a safeguard of peace, and the necessity of Federation support for Union success in negotiation. The dissentients argued that the Union should regain full freedom, and that membership of the J.I.C. was not sufficient compensation for the risks of an entangling alliance; moreover the J.I.C. did not apply to Fleet-Street. Affiliation to the P. & K.T.F. was held to be tantamount to indirect affiliation to the T.U.C. The voting in the ballot was: 1,532 for affiliation, 756 against. The total vote, 2,288, was a little less than half the membership of the Union. In 15 branches (including Leeds, Newcastle, Parliamentary and South Wales) the noes had it, in four the voting was equal, and in the remaining 80 branches there was a majority for affiliation. The N.E.C., in its report for 1926, regretted that the total vote was not larger. The consequence of the General Strike was a net loss in membership on the year of 152—the total at the beginning was 4,827, and at the end 4,675. The whole loss by resignations, lapses and deaths in the year was 560, one-half of which was caused by the Strike. The non-unionising of the Scottish newspaper offices accounted for nearly 200, many of whom had no wish to leave the Union, but did so in response to the ultimatum from the employers. It may be mentioned here that the Aberdeen Journals Ltd. (in which the old *Free Press* and *Journal* are incorporated) returned to recognition of the unions in 1941, for the first time since the misadventure of 1926. Messrs. G. Outram & Co. Ltd. (*Glasgow Herald*) followed suit in 1942.

The continued virility of the Union was shown by the enrolment of 186 new members between the end of the Strike and the end of the year. The progress since is best indicated by a membership total of 7,432 at the end of 1942. A final word may be gleaned from a letter sent to me by Mr. A. E. Holmes, secretary of the P. & K.T.F., in August, 1941: "The J.I.C. has provided machinery which has been exercised to the fullest extent in the direction of bringing about satisfactory and amicable settlements of all questions which have arisen; and it may be stated that the General Strike of 1926 was settled with greater facility in the printing industry than almost any other owing to the fact that the J.I.C. functioned to a large extent . . . The wages agreements which had been broken were reinstated as the agreed terms upon which work was resumed, and the Council has since operated in such a manner as to render disputes less likely than they were previously and also to ensure more steady progress for the unions."

CHAPTER XVIII.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ: ELECTION INCIDENTS

" Let them be well used, for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time," said Hamlet of the players. This may fitly be echoed of the men who have played well their parts on the stage of Union history. In justice to the work they did I will speak here of a little group of them whose personalities are woven into the story at many places.

A NATIVE of Bolton, " Jimmy " Haslam as a youth was a " little piecer " in a cotton mill. When these workers began to organise he became their first honorary secretary, the while he was teaching himself shorthand and grammar. At twenty-three he was a reporter on a Bolton Socialist paper, and then he went to Liverpool, where he worked on daily papers for several years. In 1906 he became a free lance at Manchester, doing work for the *Sunday Chronicle* and acting as special commissioner for the *Co-operative News*. This was the period of his pioneering work for the N.U.J., and among the band there was no firmer and better instructed trade unionist than he. In 1916 he went to the Co-operative Wholesale Society to establish its press and publicity department at Manchester, in charge of which he remained until his retirement in 1933. He was President of the Union in 1919, and editor of the *Journalist* from 1924 to 1937, the year of his death. His editorship lasted two years longer than Richardson's, and though he was an executive man strong in practical economics, and generally wise in council, his conduct of the Union's organ so successfully and so long must be accounted his greatest service. Although not versed in the fine arts of make-up and design he had a sound news sense. He produced good fat issues, well furnished with branch news, special articles on a wide range, and when he came to the awkward corners which always have to be got round he showed the solid sense which was probably his chief asset. When attacked he was good-humoured and tolerant. Once in committee when Foster, a highly-skilled sub-editor, pulled one of his numbers to pieces page by page Haslam rounded off the encounter with

the remark that it was one of the most helpful criticisms he ever had. He always fought the battle of the country journalist, and that was said to be the reason why up and down the country his name was known and loved in Union circles. After the General Strike in 1926 he wrote me about his misgivings concerning the *Manchester Guardian* House Society, and its relation to the industrial trade union movement, and concluded with this revealing passage:

I am still receiving letters and resolutions against the action of the E.C., along with indications in favour of disaffiliation. The Union has done several things which have not met with my better judgment. Perhaps I am an extremist who prefers to adopt a moderate attitude. I have done this at times, however, because, having been attached to what are often wrongly termed extreme movements, I know the risks to which we are subjecting the Union, whilst I have never felt that members of the Union (the majority) were fundamentally trade unionist in spirit and understanding. But I now feel it would be a mistake to break away from the P. & K.T.F. By this course we should certainly lose most of our negotiating power. It seems clear to me that the agreements that have been recently approved by the Federation and printing trade unions show these to be not quite compatible with the attitude of extremists. I wish "Nujjers" would cease to charge Labour men in the Union with being extremists, particularly where the Union is concerned. Extremists have certainly not been all on the Labour side. Our Labourites have not infrequently displayed a distinct sense of discipline, and argued for it against others, when understandings with our employers (Newspaper Society) have been concenred. I know one particular case in which the E.C. made a mistake, which would never have been committed if the advice of the strongest Labour advocates had been taken. However, let us hope for the best, drop passion, be tolerant and high-minded.

Walter Betts, who was President in 1931, is one of my oldest friends; for years he was a colleague in work and I came to esteem very highly his manly qualities, integrity and sound judgment. He was what used to be called a "reporter-comp.", meaning one who graduated in the case room and became a journalist. This experience was of value when he, who had imbibed his trade unionism in one of the best schools, found himself shouldering the heavy task of winning journalists over to the creed and practice which were to him natural, almost instinctive. He was apprenticed to printing on the *Cambridge Independent Press*. At Ashton-under-Lyne he was chairman of the local branch of the Typographical Association, at one time he was a "grass hand" at the *Manchester Guardian*. He began journalism at Brighouse and pursued it in Cornwall, Leicester, and Woolwich, before reaching Fleet-Street, where he finally went to the *Daily Herald*, for which he worked until retirement. It was in the Woolwich district that Betts and I were associated with one of the earliest pioneer Union movements. Again we worked together in the Central London branch, to which Betts has rendered

yeoman service. For many years he was Father of the *Herald* Chapel. He is justly proud of the work done in Fleet-Street. Speaking of Central London in a recent letter he says: "The branch became probably the largest and most efficient body of its kind, run by voluntary officials, in existence. Few, if any, Union members realised that without going to headquarters for a penny, we built up a Branch with a good office of its own, with complete records of its members, so complete that it could have carried on at any time on its own!" Both of us had worked our hardest to build up the Union in Fleet Street and he was indignant when the Branch was unfairly criticised, and misjudged, and another of his disappointments was the slow growth of chapels, and also equally the want of pluck and unity shown by some existing chapels. In a reproachful moment he would exclaim that he knew of only one editorial chapel that ranked on the same level as the chapel of which he as a compositor was a member more than 40 years ago. It is to be hoped that improvement in recent times has modified that view. In 1934 the N.E.C. appointed him Honorary Chapels Adviser as the one "who has done more perhaps than any man in the Union to convince our members of the immense importance of the office chapel." He at once embarked on an energetic "chapels' push." Betts tells interesting stories of the discoveries he made as he progressed in journalism—the lack of unity and dislike of trade unionism and the abjectness with which many submitted to indignities at the hands of public men. I could supplement him on the "reporter comp." matter. Both my grandfather and father were compositors at first and then rose to responsible positions in journalism. It was appropriate when I first entered a newspaper office as an articled pupil nearly 60 years ago that, by direction of my father, I spent some months "at case" and in gaining knowledge of the mechanical work. The wider knowledge thus obtained has stood me in good stead. Journalism must be connate in our descent, for two of my sons are in it, the eldest on the *Daily Telegraph* (London) and the youngest on the *Birmingham Gazette*.

"Rhodes of Plymouth," as he was often called, was a real friend of the working journalist and was very unselfish and courageous in his Union work. Formerly an Institute man, he joined the Union in 1911 and rising to executive rank six years later, he carried on in Devon and Cornwall the work so well founded by Perks, who had moved up to London. In organising the South

West he did excellent service. When he and Jay headed a deputation to the South Western Federation of Newspaper Owners in 1918, Rhodes produced a return of wages paid to every Union member in the area. Those of us who have experienced the difficulties of such work can but admire his feat. As one who had been through the mill Rhodes fought with a fellow feeling for journalists who were then receiving wages as low as 30/-, and even 24/- a week, some married men. This recalls my own start as a district reporter in Cornwall in 1893, at the age of 21, when Mr. Albert Groser, as editor of the *Western Morning News*, persuaded me that I was doing well to get 30/- a week, in view of my opportunities as a member of such a staff! It is difficult nowadays to realise it, but that was the outlook before the Union inculcated a higher sense of values. Rhodes had the distinction in 1926 of being the first west country President, and in that fateful year he endured the ordeal of leadership during the General Strike. In 1935 he was seized with illness and died while walking on his beloved Dartmoor.

E. J. T. Didymus ("Didy" to his colleagues) has been a worker in the Portsmouth and Southampton district from 1910. A compositor and reader who broke the Pitman speed record in the local classes, he became chief reporter of the *Southampton Times* in 1912. In 1916 he transferred to the *Portsmouth Times* as chief reporter. When Judd had to leave the N.E.C. owing to ill-health Didymus succeeded him. In 1925 he resigned his newspaper post rather than accept promotion to the editorship, as a protest against staff reductions. Then he took up free lance work, in which he achieved outstanding success. When he became President in 1934 he was acclaimed as one of the Union's most energetic and conscientious men. Once he was styled a "demon for detail," which is a picturesque way of saying that he has a mental endowment specially fitted to the handling of such difficult subjects as rules, finance, and standing orders. His mastery of the intricacies of these has been of the greatest value to the Union, and happily still is. He was naturally a pioneer of the Superannuation Fund, of which he became president in 1931, and in this he found a kindred mind in Ansell, of Cheltenham, one of the strongest advocates of that enterprise. Didymus's rare grip and skill in definition and interpretation make him a formidable opponent in argument. These qualities have fitted him to render signal service at A.D.M.'s in co-ordinating the great variety of motions on the agenda into the best sequence

and order for debate. He is at present the territorial representative of the Hants, Wilts and Dorset area on the N.E.C. The free lance clans in the Union tribe look to him as a trusted chieftain.

The central personality in the charitable field of Union work has long been H. A. Raybould, of Dudley. He is a first-rate organiser, and one might call him a master of appeals. A charity carnival in his own branch, of which he was the moving spirit, realised over £5,000. When he was President in 1927, a touching personal tribute was paid him by the writer of his memoir: "When I was over sixty I was thrown out of work by the failure of the paper I was connected with. Raybould, realising my difficulty in getting a job at that age, voluntarily gave up his position on the *Dudley Chronicle* in order that I might take it. It was a truly noble action." Realising the value of Raybould's trained mind in that particular direction the N.E.C. persuaded him in 1936 to organise and supervise the work of the branches for the W. & O. Fund. That arduous job was well and truly done. At the second delegate meeting on a proposal in favour of a W. & O. Fund, Raybould tried to get the conference to add superannuation. He recalls an amusing incident:

Lethem, the President, peremptorily ordered me to my seat. We are still without compulsory superannuation. When the Union was celebrating its 21st birthday in London I was in the chair and Lethem was a delegate. It was an awkward room and Lethem protested that I would not call upon him when he wanted to speak. I replied that I had not seen him and I had not had the pleasure of telling him to sit down. Impressions remain long when wrapped in such incidents. At that celebration dinner, we had international representatives present for the first time, I believe, at a Union function. Bourdon and Valot were the two. Bourdon died a few years later, but Valot, as secretary of the International Federation, carried on. Alas, where is Stephen Valot now? What a great man he was and what a friend of the working journalist! I was elected Vice-President at Edinburgh in 1926 and at a City banquet proposed the toast of the City of Edinburgh. I was raw but made a fine speech, extolling the virtues of the place, to conclude by submitting the toast of the City of Birmingham! Ha, ha! I have learnt a lot since then. It was during my year of office, too, that we tried to come to an agreement with the Institute. Sir Charles Igglesden was the chairman and I the vice-chairman. Richardson thought this a good tactical move. I was proud to raise the £10,000 to perpetuate the memory of the greatest of all Union workers, Harry Richardson. Though he was a pioneer he did his greatest work in negotiations on economic matters some years later.

A little band of leaders who gave special attention to education policy demand a tribute. H. T. Hamson was one of the earliest, probably the earliest, pioneer of that movement. For 14 years he had been a member of the Institute, before the Union was formed. He records "that they used to be invited to the boss's house for high tea, and as the daughters were present they could

not discuss grievances." In any event the Institute was of no tangible value to the workers, so he turned to the Union, which he was to serve faithfully and well for very many years. He did valuable work in West London, both in forming the branch and working consistently for it and he served on the N.E.C. (as the first representative there of Suburban London) until his health compelled retirement in 1929. He tells graphic stories of the intolerable conditions and starvation pay of journalists in the South Eastern districts of London in the 1900's. Before bicycles came into use he walked twelve miles to a police court, and not a half-penny was allowed for expenses. Once he had to cross a ferry, and when he charged sixpence the boss nearly fell down with astonishment. He would have had ample reason to concentrate all his work in the Union on wage increases and the betterment of conditions, but he proved to be an enthusiast for the educational programme, for which he worked long and earnestly. There was, however, such indifference in the Executive to this subject, that even his ardour cooled. When he retired in 1929 tribute was paid to his "high ideals and consistent work," but he longed for more substantial results than compliments, however sincere. He tells me that he remained at the head of the education movement "until he was really tired of the endeavour" owing to lack of encouragement. When in this mood of resentment he was not the easiest man to work with for the purpose of overcoming obstacles. As an editor he always maintained a high standard of duty to the learners under him, and he had to face the failure of his efforts to awaken Union interest in this important subject. Hamson is now 75 years of age, and when he last wrote me was chairman of the Public Library at Uxbridge.

The leadership in education fell to J. W. T. Ley some seven years ago, when he was put on the N.E.C. Since this note about him was written his death has brought grief to his colleagues and a serious loss to the Union. I have with deep regret had to alter the tenses in which I first wrote. No better choice could have been made than Ley to carry on a campaign always difficult, but specially so in recent years. Ley was a literary man as well as a journalist of ability and experience. He was a propagandist of the right sort for the cause he espoused with such vigour and skill. The provision of the appropriate education and training for the coming generation of journalists was a cause very near his heart, for he had a genuine sense of comradeship and service. To convince the older ranks of the wisdom of the policy, indeed

to frame the policy itself and then to arouse the interest of the recruits to the stage of enlistment, is not an easy task, but Ley set about it with good humour and optimism. If one wanted a taste of his quality as an advocate an example might be his article in the *Journalist* of December, 1941: " Should journalism be a recognised profession? " He riddled the argument of those who say that a trade union should show no interest in education; and as to professionalism asked the Union to make up its mind what status we should aim at. " I cannot see why we should not insist on taking our place as a profession on a level at least with school teachers and bank clerks." That is a sample of the moderation of his views, and it is of value in a cause not intrinsically popular. Ley was one of the greatest living authorities on Dickens and his works. His best known work is the annotated edition of Forster's " Life." For his earlier book " The Dickens Circle " he prepared himself by reading 200 biographies and autobiographies. These facts show his power of tenacity and concentration. His friend A. E. Wilson says that if ever the text of " Pickwick " had been lost Ley would have been the one man who might be able to restore it from memory. Since 1913 he was active in the South Wales branch both in and out of office. He was proud to remember that when he was chairman of that branch in 1915 he was one of the first Union deputation ever recognised by a body of employers. As chairman again in 1933, he organised the Newport A.D.M. and six years later became President. For nearly 20 years he was secretary of the Southern and South Western District Council. He raised large sums for Union benevolent work by organising matinees at Newport. Tireless in his education campaign Ley first tried to get the universities interested. That failing he organised a practical scheme in conjunction with the Workers' Educational Association. During 1941 he authorised about forty courses for young members in the Forces and wrote over 300 letters to encourage men in isolated posts. Quite a lot of useful facilities were provided by Ley's energy in the way of scholarships for day, week-end and summer schools, and of correspondence courses. Sorrow is felt that Ley's guidance has been lost at such a promising stage of his work.

J. G. Gregson, a senior member of the staff of the *Liverpool Daily Post* (President, 1932) and J. S. Dean, a sub-editor on the same paper, also figured prominently in educational policy. At Liverpool they arranged lectures in their office in 1926-7. About then Dean left to join the *Daily Telegraph* (London). A graduate

of Liverpool University Dean was thought by some to take too academic a view of the Union's educational requirements, but he stood his ground well and was a doughty controversialist on that and other questions. Gregson, an accomplished journalist, was ever ready to help a young colleague. From the first he was a zealous branch official and he contributed articles to the *Journalist* of historical and cultural value.

There have been two vice-presidents who did not reach the chair. One was C. Hagon, who was chief sub-editor of the old *Leicester Daily Post*. In 1919 he was forced by ill-health to resign the vice-presidency. He once made a notable declaration at a Midland rally, saying: "I have been in journalism 50 years and have been very many years with my present employers. They have always been fair, considerate and even generous to me and I owe them my loyal service. But if the Union Executive told me that it was in the interest of the Union and of my fellow members that I should come out on strike I should not hesitate a moment. I should obey the Executive no matter what the sacrifice might be." Richardson's comment on this was that "Nothing finer, nothing more stimulating has been said or written by any member in the history of the Union." The other instance in mind was J. B. Hobman, who was co-opted to succeed Hagon on the N.E.C. and was elected Vice-President in 1919. A gifted journalist, editor successively of the *Birmingham Gazette* and the *Westminster Gazette*, he was a constructive thinker and a good debater. One recalls an A.D.M., when Executive reform was under discussion and Hobman made rare fun by his onslaught on the "mandarins." Ill-health made it impossible for him to retain office.

Walter Ansell, of Cheltenham, has a record which speaks eloquently of sustained loyalty: he has been chairman of the Gloucestershire Branch since it was founded in 1908, and also he has been treasurer of the S. & S.W. District Council from its beginning. The main features in the history of his Branch have been its insistence on the value of district councils, its pioneer work for superannuation and its reception of the 1929 A.D.M. at Cheltenham, which was a very successful occasion. In one significant way Ansell is an exemplar. As a journalist he has a high conception of public duty, and in 1937 the Town Council of Cheltenham congratulated him on the completion of forty years' work in journalism in that town. Tributes were paid to his mastery of public finance, and proof of the value of his con-

structive criticism was contained in the Mayor's description of him as "the most acute brain in Cheltenham on matters of finance." It was a piece of good fortune for the Union that he had a zeal for the establishment of a superannuation fund. His expert counsel was of the greatest value when the scheme was in the stages of formulation. Unfortunately the Executive has never had the advantage of his membership. When, after the General Strike upset, I contemplated retirement from the trusteeship Ansell was prepared for nomination as my successor. By the strong persuasion of Richardson and others I was induced to continue and Ansell wrote me a very friendly letter stating that he would not think of contesting the position in view of my decision not to leave office. Congratulations to him on his completion of 50 years in journalism this year (1943), which also sees him in the chair of the S. & S.W. District Council.

Many men who have done good work for the Union, even on the national stage, will get only passing mention in this book. The names of some occur only casually in connection with an event. However regrettable this cannot be avoided, and the writer feels confident he can rely on the good understanding of all concerned. But there are a few gaps which may be filled by a composite paragraph of the gossipy type. There are some former presidents who must figure here. (A complete list of presidents is given in Appendix I.). F. W. Bill, of Norwich (President, 1928) has been on the N.E.C. since 1919. He had the distinction of election to the chair during the Union's coming-of-age year. Then he had been in the service of the *Eastern Daily Press* for 37 years, of which nearly 30 had been spent in night work as a sub-editor. The Union was always the concern of his leisure, and to it he has devoted much plodding and valuable effort. E. S. Bardsley, of Rotherham (President, 1938), had a signed letter in the *Clarion* in 1906 supporting the formation of the Union, at a time when anonymity on the subject of trade unionism in journalism was a piece of worldly wisdom. A half-timer in the cotton industry as a boy he taught himself shorthand and worked his way into journalism. When chosen for the chair he had been for 27 years editor of the *Rotherham Express*.

Carlisle takes pride in having given two Presidents to the Union—Ernest Williams (1916) and R. S. Forsyth (1935). There was no keener or more ardent member of the Executive than Williams, who joined it in 1911. When elected President his portrait was printed on the front page of the *Journal*, and he was

the first journalist to enjoy that honour. Some wag suggested that it was due to the fact that he was the son of a photographer. He introduced a letter from the President in the *Journal* as a regular feature. When Forsyth became President Williams wrote a sketch of him, paying tribute to a strength of character which often triumphed over bodily weakness. The two men had been colleagues in the journalism of Carlisle; Williams quoted the significant remark of another colleague about Forsyth during one of his illnesses: "Bob does more than his whack of work when he is here, and it is up to us to do his share cheerfully while he is away." Loyalty led Forsyth, in spite of indifferent health, to "do his whack" for the Union.

There have been eight editors of the *Journal* and the *Journalist*. C. P. Robertson was a tireless Union advocate everywhere. His work in Fleet Street is described elsewhere. As editor he was conscientious and sober, rather than brilliant, and did good service. Jay in 1922 at once impressed his personality on the paper. "I am very busy trying to lick improvement into the *Journalist*," he soon wrote, "and it is a lonesome job." How true that is every editor could testify. No staff to work with, often no colleagues to consult, an isolated job. It may be better nowadays, with a consultative committee of the N.E.C. at work. Jay's touch was quickly seen in lighter notes, personal sketches, cartoons, leaders seasoned with Attic salt, and even a column of witty brevities of the kind with which he often enlivened assemblies. All this was not difficult to a professional humorist of his resources, for did he not write Charivari in *Punch*? When he became Vice-President in 1920 he protested: "I have had some narrow escapes. Once I nearly became a member of the Institute, and once Foster nearly shook hands with me." (You must know the real Foster to get the correct flavour of this banter). Some evil genius must have taken control in Owen Rattenbury's period, short as it was. His fight for "freedom," as he conceived it, brought him into conflict with the Executive. A free churchman, he was long special commissioner for the *Methodist Times*. Later he became Parliamentary correspondent for the *Western Morning News*. The present editor, Schaffer, was chairman of Central London Branch in 1940-41. After some years on the P.A., where he became acting night editor, he joined *Reynolds's News* as political and industrial correspondent. He is a keen trade unionist and an excellent speaker. In the *Journalist* he made an immediate transformation by introducing headlines and

make-up of the latest style, with the technical help of Allen Hutt. A little bit dazzling, perhaps, by comparison with the older conventions, but even so, with the narrower columns, possessing the practical value of 20 per cent. more reading matter. Some strikingly good pictures have been introduced. Profiting by the misfortunes of his predecessor Schaffer laid down clear principles governing the relation of Editor, Executive and Union. I had planned to devote a whole chapter to the story of the Union's journal, but cannot squeeze it in. In 1917 the *Journal* became the *Journalist* which started with No. 1 Vol. I in May of that year.

Although never on the Executive E. J. Powell has done much Union work in branch and council. He became managing editor of the *Willesden Chronicle* about eight years ago, when his membership changed from active to honorary. Although in retirement his interest in the Union is still strong, and his gratitude to it lively for the transformation wrought in conditions in areas where as a young man he suffered the adversities then incidental to so much of weekly journalism. His experiences are much like those of H. T. Hamson, with whom he was for many years associated in vigorous Union work in West London. Powell began his apprenticeship in 1895 and, like myself, still has his " vellum." These old documents are quaint reading nowadays. Mine is dated 1888 and bound me as an apprentice to the art of reporting for five years, the weekly pay rising in that period from 5/- to 15/-. " The said apprentice," it reads, " shall not contract matrimony within the said term nor play at cards or dice tables or any other unlawful games whereby his said masters may have any loss with their own goods or others, without licence of his said masters . . . he shall not haunt taverns or playhouses." (Incidentally I was sent regularly to " playhouses " to report for the paper). Powell found congenial work on the *Willesden Chronicle* and *Kilburn Times*, and rose from junior reporter to managing editor in nearly forty years of successful journalism. Looking back on a long career of Union service, which is typical of others in many a branch throughout the country, Powell writes : " I was happy and fortunate to come under the inspiring influence of Watts in the early days of the Union, and my enthusiasm for the cause was largely due to the tremendous driving power and self sacrifice that lay behind his efforts for his fellow journalists. Largely because of his work many of us who had known rough times saw the dawn of a new era. If the N.U.J. holds fast to the

high ideals of men of the sterling character of Watts a great future lies before it. Higher and higher wages must never be the 'be all and end all' of the Union. Our aims and objects must go far beyond that in the Union that Watts visualised." That is the natural outlook of one who has always been a strong advocate of an education policy and who once produced a comprehensive syllabus for an A.D.M.

Branch history is prolific of records. There are living to-day many foundation members, and to put forward a claim to a "record" is a sure ignition of the heather. There are cases of long and honourable service in branches which gain their own reward, without wide publicity. All the Union knows of the remarkable achievements of a Pegg at Cardiff, and an Ansell at Cheltenham; not so many of Small, a founder member of Wolverhampton Branch, in which he has never been out of office since the Union began and of which he is still treasurer (1943); of W. Gedney, of Blackburn, claimed to be the first branch chairman in the Union; of Charles Hulin, for many years secretary of North London Branch, and a delegate determined to be heard at A.D.M.; of Arnold Holden, of Manchester, a founder member and a zealous F.O.C., now elected a life member; of E. R. Hill, who co-operated with Watts in 1907 and was successively chairman of three branches, North Staffs, Mid-Cheshire and Manchester—and so the list could be prolonged, yet many a loyal worker be omitted. Will the reader therefore regard these instances as examples of the fine spirit and ungrudging service throughout the land which have gone to building the Union. As a singular honour it should be noted that Alice Chalmers Lawford (as she was before her marriage in 1931) is the only woman to have been a member of the N.E.C., to which she was elected in 1920 as a territorial representative of the South of England. Records of long service are always interesting and a diamond jubilee is something to talk about. In November, 1922, was reported a presentation to George Dunsford, the doyen of York journalists, and chairman of the Union Branch, who had just celebrated his sixtieth year in the profession. Apparently it was a family failing, for the recipient mentioned that a cousin of his in Somerset entered journalism seven years before him and was still at work. With one remarkable occasion this little collection must close. In January, 1936, Merseyside pressmen of over 40 years' experience were the guests of the Liverpool Press Club. They numbered fourteen and their combined ser-

vices amounted to 650 years. Among them were Caleb Rees, an early member of the Executive, Ivie Fulton, who was prominent at the Liverpool A.D.M., and J. G. Gregson, President in 1932.

Two famous recruits to the Union in London were G. B. Shaw and H. G. Wells. The former joined in 1931 and in paying five years' contributions in advance said: "That will take me up to 80 years of age. I am a journalist and nothing else." About Wells a neat little story was told at the time he joined. It was the day in 1921 when O'Donovan ("Donny" of Central London fame) was buried. Foster and Meakin, after attending the funeral, lunched at the National Liberal Club with W. H. Armitt, one of the Union's founders and now a director of News Chronicle Ltd., and an associate member of the Union. The room was rather crowded and Wells, looking round for a seat, spied a vacant chair at their table. With a gesture of permission to join he sat down. He had to be warned that he had fallen among pressmen, or in picturesque metaphor, that he had entered the lion's den. "Oh, hows' that?" he asked, and was told that it was a gathering of men of the N.U.J., which he ought to join. "Am I qualified?" "Do you get your living as a journalist?" The reply is alleged to have been: "Well, now I am getting more from my journalism than from my books." So he was adjudged to be qualified, and was duly sent a nomination form. He returned it filled up with a letter saying he felt he ought to join, and was shortly elected a member of the Central London Branch.

Quite a considerable number of Union members have won seats in Parliament. Naturally, the first name to come to mind is the Union's President of 1925, T. S. Dickson, known affectionately as "good old Tommy." After a hard struggle, begun at eleven years of age when he left school to become a grocer's errand boy, he got into journalism, served five years on the *Scotsman*, and then (more to his political liking) became acting-editor of *Forward*, the well-known Scottish labour weekly. He contributed wisdom and drive to Union counsels. If he worked hard he could play well, and shone on many joyous social occasions which relieved the drab monotony of annual debate. It was a feast of reason and flow of soul when he and Jay had a contest of wits on the platform, flashing about the foibles of the Gaelic and the Saxon tribes.

The Union's most distinguished Parliamentarians were Philip Snowden and William Graham. When the former was Chancellor of the Exchequer and the latter President of the Board of Trade

in the Labour Cabinet of 1929, both were guests of honour at a Union dinner in London. Snowden confessed that he liked journalism better than politics and Graham told of his early newspaper work in the South of Scotland. Lord Riddell, always a welcome and witty guest, said that a trade union secretary had to be a Snowden and a Graham rolled into one. Vernon Bartlett entered Parliament when he was diplomatic correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, and John Morgan when he was agricultural correspondent of the *Daily Herald*. Both were members of Central London Branch. In 1929 the N.E.C. put on record with satisfaction that fourteen members of the Union had been returned to the House of Commons. Last year (1942) G. L. Reakes was returned for Wallasey, and in recent times journalism in the House has had effective spokesmen in Ivor Thomas, L. Hore Belisha, and Tom Driberg (then "William Hickey" of the *Daily Express*), all members of the Union. The Minister of Information (Mr. Brendan Bracken), winding up a debate on propaganda in the Commons, said the House was recruiting "a fine supply of journalists." It is indeed gratifying to journalism as a whole to see its representatives taking a worthy part in the legislative body. In the debate alluded to speeches of high practical value, from the expert point of view of journalism, were made by Thomas, Bartlett and Driberg; it was the latter's maiden speech.

Members of the Union now sitting in the House of Commons are: Vernon Bartlett (Ind. Bridgwater); F. J. Bellenger (Lab. Bassetlaw), who is a special war-time member of the Union; L. Hore-Belisha (Ind. Devonport); T. Driberg (Ind. Maldon); H. MacNeil (Lab. Greenock); G. L. Reakes (Ind. Wallasey); G. Ridley (Lab. Clay Cross); Ivor Thomas (Lab. Keighley). A Dublin member, J. McCann, sits in the Dail. Ivor Thomas was born at Cwnbran, Newport, Mon., the son of a brickworker. A brilliant student he won his way to Oxford and gained a "double first"—Mathematical Moderations, 1925, and Literæ Humaniores, 1928. He was Gladstone Research Student at Hawarden, 1929-30, and to these classical achievements he added the distinction of a double "blue," for athletics and cross-country running. His first years in journalism were spent on *The Times*, 1930-37; and then he became chief leader writer on the *News Chronicle*, 1937-39. When War came he joined the Royal Fusiliers and later served in the Royal Norfolk Regiment (Captain, 1941). He was seconded for periods to the Ministry of Information and the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office.

The question of the journalistic status of M.P.'s, mainly Labour, who were in the habit of writing for the Press, was raised in an acute form in 1929 when Miss Ellen Wilkinson applied for membership of the Union. She was a trade union organiser who had become an M.P., and who supplemented her income by work for the Press. Friends of hers in Parliament (journalists and members of the Union) asked her to join and said she was eligible if she was " wholly or mainly " occupied in journalism. Being a good trade unionist she had doubts, and postponed her application until " mainly " represented her case. The Socialist editor of the *Journalist* (Haslam) inclined to the view that persons in the position of Miss Wilkinson were not eligible. He wrote that Labour men were found competing with trade union journalists by writing for the capitalist newspapers, which he regarded as a " funny " situation. About that time the influx of Labour M.P.'s into the journalistic field was specially marked, being encouraged by editors in search of " names " for their features, and having a partiality for the magic " M.P." It was recognised that, journalism not being a closed profession, this could not be stopped, but argued that it was not the business of the Union to encourage this outside competition by giving the writers the status of Union membership. In the end Miss Wilkinson was not admitted to the Union, although nominated for both the Central London and Trade and Periodical Branches.

Coming to the salaried officers notice must be taken of some " incidents " that marked the elections of the secretary. For eleven years and more the Union was run on the footing of voluntary service, subject to the granting of such honoraria as were obviously required, but by the beginning of 1918 the N.E.C. expressed the general opinion in declaring that it was urgently necessary to appoint a whole-time paid General Secretary. The first step was a ballot, and with the voting papers a statement was issued emphasising that the wages campaign, a possible Whitley Council for the newspaper industry, and the development of broader policy, made a whole-time official essential. As to finance, investments were producing £300 a year, and honoraria (£175 in the preceding year) must in future cost almost as much as a Secretary's salary. Union leaders were not lacking in courage and keenness, but it was not fair to expect them to carry on indefinitely the work of deputations, which were growing in frequency and importance. The profession was only partially unionised, the chapel movement had barely begun, and the spirit

was not entirely unknown on the managerial side which would employ the big stick of victimisation. Even if this did not involve the open method of dismissal there were subtler ways of discouraging Union advocacy and agitation. Hence came the call for a paid secretary who could dare to be independent, and who could face the embattled proprietors without misgivings as to what might happen to his wife and children. The ballot on the principle gave a majority in favour of 1,424 against 10.

A delicate question had delayed the issue of the ballot paper. Should the proposed salary be mentioned, and, more difficult, should the name of W. N. Watts be revealed as a candidate? Just at the time Watts's illness took an ominous turn, and clearly we all intended to consult his wishes. Martin and myself stuck firmly to the idea that the initial ballot should be taken on the principle only, with no name and details to encumber it, and that policy prevailed. A note of mine to Martin dated Feb. 1, 1918, gives a graphic little touch which seems strangely familiar as I write this 25 years later: "This week has been the very devil with raids. Strain very great. Still we are plugging on." In spite of all our precautions one member showed something worse than indiscretion in stating in a letter to the *Newspaper World* that Watts was a candidate for the job. This aroused much indignation, for it was felt that Watts's welfare in his own post at Manchester was at stake. In the midst of his mortal anxieties Watts dictated a letter to me on Jan. 16, 1918, which now awakens pathetic memories. He told me that his illness had taken "rather a bad turn," that a specialist had examined him and had advised him to see a distinguished Manchester surgeon. "If I get over it," he wrote, "as no doubt I will, I will be a candidate for the secretaryship, but if the unexpected happened, and it were publicly known that I was thinking of leaving the *Evening News* my wife would probably forfeit any claim she might have against my present employers . . . If the principle were agreed at the A.D.M. the delegates could be told confidentially that I intended to stand but the ballot could be withheld until it suited my purpose to have my name disclosed . . . I am vain enough to think that if I became a candidate I would prove a winner. I am sorry to have caused any inconvenience and admit frankly that my action is dictated by selfishness. I know you won't blame me for that." All embarrassment was avoided by the form in which the ballot was taken, and fears that suggestions about the effect of Union work on his health might be inimical to him were only too tragically

dispelled when the real nature was known of the dread incurable disease which had him in its grip.

When the A.D.M. opened at Leicester on March 28, 1918, Watts had mustered enough strength to attend, although one could see it was more will power, for he was clearly a very sick man. Some disagreement was shown on the question of the salary to be offered for the new post. The N.E.C. had agreed that it should not be less than £400 per annum. East Lancashire contended that the Union could not afford that figure and suggested £250. The conference accepted £400, which was then equal to about £300 before the war. It was agreed to put off the election for a time. Two months after the A.D.M. Watts died. At the end of June the N.E.C. defined the terms of employment of the new officer to be elected. The salary of £400 was for full-time work; the officer was not to be a member of the N.E.C.; nor to exercise a vote either in the N.E.C. or the A.D.M. The ballot was to be conducted on the exhaustive transferable vote system, a measure of economy by avoidance of the considerable cost of a possible second ballot. The Finance Committee, which had to carry the ballot through, had to consult counsel as to the legality of the voting system proposed, in view of Rule 11d, which provided for a second ballot in the absence of a clear majority. Leach pointed out that the second ballot was quite different from the transferable vote, but the latter system could be used if each candidate gave a written consent. All the candidates gave a written undertaking to abide by the result of the ballot "conducted according to the principles of the Transferable Vote, as defined in the Report by the Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into Electoral Systems, 1910." This system was thereupon adopted. The voter arranges the candidates in the order of his choice by placing the figures 1, 2, 3, etc., against their names. At the first count only first votes are reckoned. If then no candidate has an absolute majority of the total votes the candidate with the smallest number of first votes is eliminated and his voting papers distributed according to the names marked 2. The papers with no preference No. 2 are regarded as "exhausted" and their number is deducted from the total for the purpose of calculating the absolute majority at the second count. If after this no candidate has an absolute majority the process is repeated as often as necessary until the required result is obtained.

Seven candidates were nominated by branches, namely: W. Armitage, Nottingham; J. E. Brown, Redhill, Surrey; T. A.

Davies, Cardiff; H. M. Richardson, Manchester; T. A. Roberts, Northampton; Lieut. C. P. Robertson, R.A.F., in camp at South Carlton, Lincoln, and Lieut. Percy Rudd, London. After the papers had been returned five of the candidates entered a protest, alleging irregular conduct by one of the candidates (Robertson) and his chief supporter (T. Foster). The incident has only a bare historical interest, but it may be stated that the "irregularity" was the sending of Robertson's "election address" to members away on active service, to addresses obtained from the roll kept by Jay, of Bristol—a course of action open to anyone engaged in the contest who might have the cleverness to think of it. A rare dust was raised by certain parties interested, with a gift for scenting intrigue. The count was held up for an enquiry by the N.E.C. Painful personal issues were involved in the discussion, over which it was my duty to preside. There was relief when it was unanimously declared "that nothing has happened to interfere with the free and unbiased vote of every member of the Union in the election of General Secretary," and resolved "that the result of the election when announced must be accepted without question." A note in the *Journalist* happily closed the incident: "After an exhaustive inquiry, the whole of the Executive, including those who had laid the complaint, were perfectly satisfied that nothing reflecting upon the honour or the integrity of any candidate had been done, and the charges were withdrawn. We should not refer to the incident but for the fact that the innocence of the members concerned should be as widely published as the charges were in the ruby columns of rumour."

Veitch and myself were the returning officers and as five counts were necessary the job took quite a big staff of enumerators the whole of a long day. The first count gave the following result: Total Votes 1,816, absolute majority required 909; result—Richardson 766, Robertson 461, Rudd 172, Brown 169, Davies 114, Roberts 87, Armitage 47. The figures of the fifth and final count were: Total votes 1,689, absolute majority 845: result—Richardson 931, Robertson 548, Brown 210. Thus Richardson had 86 votes more than the absolute majority. The difference between the first and fifth total votes figures, 127, was accounted for by the "exhausted" papers, a definition of which has already been given. This system makes "plumping" inoperative, for to record only one vote and give no preference votes, does not aid the candidate favoured; it merely disfranchises the voter.

When Richardson died in December, 1936, and the vacancy

had to be filled there was again a dispute, but of a different kind. An Executive circular to branches informed them that they were entitled to make nominations for the vacant office, and that nominees must be members of the Union. If there were more than two candidates the voting would be on the exhaustive transferable vote system, as in the previous secretarial election, according to a rule then in force. No expenditure was to be incurred out of branch funds in promoting the candidature of any individual. The salary was £750 a year, rising by annual increments of £50 to £1,000, and there was to be provision for superannuation. Three nominations by branches were received, namely, C. J. Bundock (Central London), H. A. Raybould (Wolverhampton) and F. Rhodes (Croydon). The President (F. G. Humphrey) was named by several branches, but decided not to go forward. The Emergency Committee had a complaint from Raybould that a circular had been sent out by the Birmingham Branch secretary in the name of that Branch, offering to send speakers to branch meetings to support the candidature of the President, who was the Treasurer of the Branch. The Committee, on the evidence submitted, was satisfied that the President was in no way to blame for that circular, and had no knowledge of what had been done by the Branch Committee. It was regretted that the Birmingham secretary should have committed his branch to any course of action which it had had no opportunity of considering, and an instruction was issued to branches that nothing must be spent out of branch funds to promote any candidature, and no propaganda undertaken in the name of any branch making a nomination. At the N.E.C., Honorary Standing Counsel (G. F. L. Bridgman) stated that there was no provision in the rules restricting nominations to branches, as the N.E.C. had laid down. A motion that the ballot be deferred until after the A.D.M. was defeated by 18 votes to two, and the decision was to proceed with the election on the lines decided.

This properly put the cat in the pigeon loft. Honorary Counsel proffered resignation and sent a long printed statement to the branches, stating his opinion that to confine nominations to branches was not according to rule, and it ruled out individual candidatures. If the matter were brought into Court there was a substantial danger of the election being declared void. The President supported Counsel. A special meeting of the N.E.C. was held to consider a letter from K. Graham Thomson, a member of the Nottingham Branch, stating that he could find nothing in

the rules to warrant the N.E.C. requiring candidates to be nominated by branches, and he was advised that such action, and the ballot being taken, were *ultra vires*. He requested that his name be put forward as a candidate and that a proper ballot be taken after due notice to the Union, so that other candidates might present themselves if they wished. The presence of Standing Counsel at the meeting was challenged in view of his resignation, but the President stated that the resignation had not been considered or accepted by the N.E.C., and he had asked Bridgman to attend to advise him. A motion that Counsel be asked to retire was ruled out of order and some members thereupon protested against the constitution of the meeting. Standing Counsel was, of course, the officer of the whole Executive (of which, however, he was not a member), and the objectors held that he had no right to attend a meeting unless invited so to do by the Executive.

Resolutions were received from 21 branches asking for the postponement of the election until the matter had been considered by the approaching A.D.M. The Coventry Branch, believing that the method adopted was contrary to the rules, thought an injunction should be sought to restrain the ballot from being conducted in the manner proposed, and authorised its secretary, P. G. Innel Clement, to act as an individual member to secure such injunction. The three Trustees (Betts, Mansfield and Turner) were each served with a High Court writ to appear in an action at the suit of P. G. Innel Clement, who claimed "an injunction to restrain the Union from illegally proceeding with the election of a General Secretary by confining the election to members only who have been nominated by branches of the Union, contrary to the rules of the Union, and from expending any part of the funds of the Union on or in connection with the ballot for such illegal election." It was moved that existing arrangements for the ballot be cancelled, that steps be taken to elect a General Secretary after the A.D.M., and that the N.E.C. support a motion at the A.D.M. to amend rule 14 (*b*) so that the candidates for the post should be nominated by a branch or branches. Twelve members voted for this motion and twelve against. It was carried by the casting vote of the President; Bridgman was asked to withdraw his resignation and did so. The ballot papers (with Bundock, Raybould and Rhodes as the candidates) already returned were sent to the Proportional Representation Society to be opened, searched for papers having no connection with the

ballot, and then destroyed. No more was heard of the legal proceedings begun by Coventry.

In an explanatory circular to branches the N.E.C. said that nomination by branches was the usual trade union practice, and it was adopted when Richardson was elected in 1918. Moreover it had been the practice in relation to the majority of officers and N.E.C. members ever since the Union was founded. The demand of the Nottingham member and the issue of the Coventry writ led the N.E.C. not to fight the issue in Court, but to wait for the A.D.M. to get the rule altered and then take a new ballot on the same method as the cancelled ballot. The President notified complete agreement and said: "Our aims must be to preserve a united front." Bridgman added a note that there had never been any suggestion that those who differed from him were actuated by any other motive than a desire to serve the Union to the best of their ability.

The A.D.M. at Torquay on March 26, 1937, discussed the issues in secret session. In some quarters there was a desire to discuss "the mistakes of the past," but the Presidential view that "an inquest would serve no useful purpose" prevailed. Nevertheless, there had been such a strong call for "full and frank disclosure" in which the President himself had joined, that this blanketing of discussion appeared a surprising development to many. Beyond noting this I will not attempt to lift the veil, for that would be to exceed the recital of overt facts which I am attempting. Rule 14 (*b*) was altered to provide that nominations for the office of General Secretary should come from a branch or branches. More precise rules to govern future elections were adopted. Nominations were invited from branches immediately. There was to be no expenditure by any branch on circulating canvassing material for any candidate; ballot papers were to be returned by members direct to the Proportional Representation Society; the names of nominating branches were not to be given. There were four candidates, and the result was as follows:—C. J. Bundock 1,900; F. Rhodes 313; J. M. Fraser 296; K. G. Thomson 167. Thus Bundock had an absolute majority of first preference votes. So much for the facts, as disclosed by official documents. Behind the actual events as recorded is a story of high tension, of rivalries and suspected intrigues which gave occasion for regret to all whose aim was the welfare of the Union. At one stage Foster notified impending resignation (though not on the ground of the dispute) but at the A.D.M. he accepted

re-election. Like others in Union history the storm came and went—just as some Atlantic depressions, which can be very alarming for a time, only blow down a few tiles and chimney pots.

The captain of the Union ship at this time, F. G. Humphrey, was a man of power and resource—a good speaker, a sociable and good-natured colleague, a journalist of parts and a keen angler. He spent much of his journalistic youth in the North, doing good work on the *Daily News* (Northern Edition). After a literary interval in a lodging in Middle Temple Lane he went to Scotland in an editorial capacity, and then in 1926 joined the *Birmingham Mail.* A keen member of the Union, he was treasurer of the Birmingham Branch, and in many ways was active in the life of the City. After only four years on the N.E.C. he was chosen President in 1936. On the platform during his year of office he did valiant service. He was ever ready with a vigorous speech on the "live" topic of the moment, such as the value of the Code of Conduct; the need for a real standard of professional ethics; a ruthless condemnation of the sins of sensational journalism, with its intrusions into private grief; and the misuse against journalists of the Official Secrets Acts. In 1941 he was appointed Regional Information Officer for the London Area under the Ministry of Information. The *Journalist* was in his editorial charge for a considerable period, and many issues revealed the working of a broad, and sometimes original, mind.

Now what of the man who emerged as the principal officer of the Union? Bundock had the satisfaction of receiving a conclusive vote of confidence in an overwhelming ballot majority. Everyone will admit that he both deserved and needed it. For 14 years he had done excellent service as National Organiser, but he launched on that voyage in a sea of troubles. Twice he survived the ordeal and proved his worth. One can find some corroboration in his experience of the saying of Sophocles that without trouble nothing can be successful. It was in 1923 at the age of 31 that he was appointed the first National Organiser. There were 18 applicants for the post and a committee of the N.E.C., of which I was a member, produced a short list of three. The N.E.C. balloted on these by the transferable vote, and C. P. Robertson was the winner. Owing to a change of circumstances he was unable to accept and Bundock, who was next in the vote, was chosen. Before he could settle down to his work South Wales ran a campaign throughout the country against him. "In view

of his pacifist efforts and his attitude as a conscientious objector during the War" they called for the termination of his appointment. Controversy raged. The President (W. Meakin) and N.E.C. issued statements that Bundock had been chosen on his qualifications for the work, and that no candidate had been asked whether he was a C.O. or a pacifist or what his politics were. Without any pressure Bundock had severed his political connections on appointment, and this was cited by Richardson as an assurance "to Conservative and Liberal members of the Union." The whole issue was debated at the 1924 A.D.M., which by a majority of 3,384 votes against 447, endorsed the action of the N.E.C. in making the appointment.

This was the all-clear signal for a long spell of valuable work, in which he displayed his skill as a trade union leader, his gifts as a speaker, and his ability as a writer, not only of propagandist articles in the *Journalist*, but of letters in the course of difficult negotiations which demanded cogent argument, psychological insight and persuasive power. These qualities had been developed in his early years, when he was an officer of the National Union of Clerks and later when he was an active worker in the Labour Movement and became a Parliamentary candidate. His failure in this left the way open for what was to become his main life's work. The one relevant criticism in 1923 was that his experience of all-round working journalism was very limited. As a lad he started on the *Christian Commonwealth*, the organ of the Rev. R. J. Campbell's New Theology. Then he joined the *Labour Leader* as a sub-editor under Mr. Fenner Brockway's editorship, subsequently serving as Parliamentary and London correspondent. Afterwards he was editor of the *Leicester Pioneer*. Most of this admittedly was in one channel, but the important thing was that Bundock had the natural endowments for his job, and was able speedily to fill any gaps in that knowledge of the wider fields of journalism which was necessary for his responsible Union work. He went well in harness with his chief and when in 1936 Richardson broke down Bundock shouldered the heavy burden of acting-secretaryship with a devotion and skill which commanded the gratitude of the Union. It was a time of constant negotiation on big questions, and one incident stands out. The Law Courts strike, a critical occasion, was wisely and courageously handled, and its success added much to the Union prestige, especially in Fleet Street. In the conciliation work of the Joint Industrial Council he did good service. The path of trade union

officers is not strewn with roses, and bouquets are a rare reward. As this was being written Bundock was in the throes of a "constitutional crisis" within the Union, since duly settled. He stands firmly on 20 years of service, and can look forward humanly speaking, to many years of opportunity. A discerning critic has well called him "a safe man, modest, conscientious, determined, trustworthy."

It will be appropriate here to follow on with the organisers. In 1937 the post of National Organiser, vacant by the promotion of Bundock, was not filled, but a new office created, called briefly the T. & P. Organiser. Although it was reckoned that 90 per cent. of newspaper men were enrolled in the Union, the vast field of trade, technical, and periodical journalism, containing over 3,000 working journalists, had only been touched on its fringes. There were but 300 members in the Trade and Periodical Branch, and the large number outside were a menace to the Union. It was wisely decided to appoint a new officer to handle the problem. The man chosen was L. A. Berry, who had been secretary of the Branch, and in 1934 succeeded B. A. Cooper as its representative on the N.E.C. It was a formidable task, but he essayed it with ability and determination, and soon the fruits of his work became increasingly visible. In recognition of his services he was appointed National Organiser in 1938. In this larger sphere his earnestness and capacity for solid work have justified his selection. Ere he got fairly into his stride the war came, and since he has rendered signal service by his attention to the welfare and interests of members on service at home and on foreign fronts. He maintained contact with them by his live pages of story and news in the *Journalist*, and organises the dispatch of parcels to prisoners of war in the hands of the enemy. Seeing that about one-half of the membership are in the Fighting Services this is work of vital importance, and Berry has risen to the occasion worthily. Another sphere of service, for which the Union readily seconded him, opened up for Berry when the International Federation of Journalists of Allied or Free Countries was formed in December, 1941, to take the place of the old I.F.J., which had been beaten down by the war. The initiative came from the Union, and Berry, who organised the conference which brought the new body into being, was appointed its secretary. In October, 1938, P. Fullerton-Bustard, chairman of the T. & P. Branch, was chosen to succeed Berry as T. & P. Organiser. He was selected from 10 applicants, and favourable impressions of his gifts and

personality were soon confirmed by the way he set about his work in a difficult field. Conditions in war time intensify the difficulties, but the new officer has found plenty of worth-while enterprises. Even in war time applications for membership are received and negotiations on wages and conditions in the great publishing houses claim the organiser's attention.

During its existence of 36 years the Union has had four honorary general treasurers. J. C. Menzies, of Manchester, was the first (1907-12); he was succeeded by G. H. Lethem, of Leeds, who took the office in 1912 after his three-years presidency, and relinquished it in 1916 on promotion to a post at Glasgow which involved the forfeiture of his full membership for some years; W. Veitch was chosen to follow him in 1916, and held office until Foster was appointed in 1923. Foster has the unique distinction of having been both president and treasurer at the same time. This important office is not one to be coveted by those who do not possess a clear head, and a capacity for concentrated work. Fortunately the Union has not lacked men of that quality. The first two treasurers figure elsewhere in this book, so does Foster, but particular allusion must here be made to the length of the latter's still-continuing tenure of the office. His "budget" speeches at A.D.M.'s are a notable item in those early hours of the conference, when the minds of delegates are in the most suitable frame for attending to sober and exacting matters of finance, yet withal he has the journalistic faculty of imparting touches of romance and sentiment to tables and figures, and his addiction to the "statistical peroration" has become proverbial.

Veitch remains for record, which is called for both by his personal qualities and services, and by the distinctive contest that resulted in his election. A native of Edinburgh he learned journalism on the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, the daughter paper of the *Scotsman*. "For some unfathomable reason," he once informed me in data given very unwillingly, "I floundered right into London as a member of the L.N.A. reporting staff at a salary of ——, which perhaps had the merit of inducing me to leave after five months and go to the Exchange Telegraph Company, where it was impressed upon me that I had no chance of the job if I held such new-fangled notions as trade union principles in journalism. As I had at that time a clear conscience I got the job, but it is a strange coincidence that, if my memory serves me right, I was one of the first members of the staff to break away from the paths of virtue as outlined in that interview. About

1910 I joined the *Aberdeen Daily Journal* as London Correspondent." It is of interest to note that Veitch, before he came to London had never heard of the N.U.J., and when he did he at first looked askance at it, although his face was always resolutely set against the Institute of Journalists, for obvious reasons. He joined the Union at the formation of the Parliamentary Branch, ere long became its chairman, and then chairman of the London and Home Counties District Council. Once he was styled the Union's "representative at Westminster," a sobriquet which suggests the many valuable services he was able to render in that strategic post.

During the Great War the Union made its first solid advances, and then Veitch was invaluable. How well I remember those breath-taking ascents to the top of the Central News offices in New Bridge Street, where from midnight on Veitch was preparing his messages for distant Aberdeen, but was able to spare intervals now and then to discuss some financial business of the Union or the War Distress Fund, some impending interview with the magnates of Fleet Street or the Lords of Whitehall. He did not show emotion readily, so that once in a long train journey directed to Executive business, I ventured, with the freedom we always permitted ourselves, to charge him with "not having a soul above a cash book." The truth, of course, was that he had a good Scottish level head, and saw through an issue and all round it as quickly as any of us. When in later years he became editor of the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* (which incorporated the old *Free Press* and *Journal*) the Union lost a valued member. Now he is a director of Allied (changed to Kemsley) Newspapers, which includes the Aberdeen papers in its great group, and that post is perhaps the natural goal of his business capacities.

The election of Veitch as treasurer in 1916 was a significant event in the growing trial of strength between Manchester and London. Although the Northern City was still the headquarters of the Union, the influence of London and the growing volume of executive Union work which inevitably centred there, pointed to change. London was claiming its right to one of the general officers of the Union, hitherto the sole preserve of the North. When the treasurership became vacant I nominated Veitch, on behalf of Central London, his competitor being P. B. Jones (West Riding representative on the Executive). Veitch was chosen by ballot in the Executive by ten votes to eight. Needless to say the Parliamentary Branch regarded the choice as a high

compliment. When, in the first flush of victory for the South, I wrote a rather high-flown note to the new Treasurer, Veitch brought me to earth with a cool and characteristic reply: "Dear Mansfield, You are a blighter! I am almost tempted to accuse you of chicanery, but for the moment I shall content myself by acknowledging that the position in which I find myself is all attributable to your forensic abilities. By Jove, you must have 'swung the lead,' as they say in the Army, to have hypnotised the Manchester gang. For all this my thanks are yours."

The Trustees are honorary general officials and must be put "on the record." In the minutes of the foundation conference there is no mention of trustees, and their first appointment was in 1908 at Leeds. The list of those who have held the office, with the year of their election, is as follows:—1908, E. F. Hind (Chesterfield), J. S. Raine (Blackburn), H. M. Richardson (Manchester); 1910, R. C. Spencer (Manchester), W. B. Proudfoot (Sheffield), Richardson; 1912, Spencer, Richardson, W. E. M. Perks (Plymouth); 1913, J. H. Harley (London), Spencer, Richardson; 1919, Spencer, F. J. Mansfield (London), A. Martin (Sheffield); 1921, Martin, Mansfield, C. E. Turner (Manchester); 1922, W. Betts (London), Mansfield, Turner. The three last mentioned have remained in office ever since. For most of the time the Trustees have been members of the Executive, though not always with voting power, there being a period in which they sat on the N.E.C. in rotation, each one serving a year. This "in and out" plan proved unacceptable and in due time the three entered on full membership of the N.E.C., including, of course, the power of voting. They are also entitled to attend the A.D.M., and vote. There have been two honorary standing counsel, appointed by the N.E.C., namely, George E. Leach from the beginning until 1920, and G. F. L. Bridgman, from 1920 until the present.

The head office of the Union is a busy place, and the allocation of staff duties is as follows: L. A. Berry, National Organiser, visits branches, assists in organising efforts, deals with membership questions and transfers and keeps the unemployment register; something of the work of P. Fullerton-Bustard, the Trade and Periodical Organiser, has already been mentioned; C. J. Cook, the Finance Officer, who has been in the office 22 years, keeps all the accounts and is in charge of the financial administration, deals with benefit claims (unemployment, death, special grants, and W. & O. Fund grants), is assistant secretary to the Super-

annuation Fund, keeps its accounts and in the main transacts its business; while supervising the general office as chief clerk is H. S. Toynbee (with 21 years' service) who also has charge of the business of the Approved Society. Others on the staff are J. Martin, filing, committee and minute clerk; R. Boaden, assistant to the Finance Officer; D. Reece, who keeps the record and index of members, an incessant job owing to the great number of changes of address, and movements from branch to branch, and also looks after the distribution of the *Journalist*; and J. Lorenz, shorthand-typist. Martin, Reece and Lorenz are serving in H.M. Forces and their places are temporarily filled by substitutes.

CHAPTER XIX

WINNING THE CELTS

The Romans might build their high walls and defend them by garrisoned forts, but they never succeeded in subjugating and Romanising the Gael, whether in the Highlands of Scotland, in the wilds of Wales, or in the sea-girt isle of Erin.—"We Twa" (Lord and Lady Aberdeen).

ALTHOUGH England as the predominant partner claims nearly the whole of this history, a chapter must fairly be allowed to the fortunes of the Union in those outer territories which have been given the picturesque, if not entirely accurate, title of the Celtic fringe. Of these Wales was in the movement right at the start, Scotland followed hard after, but Ireland, with its insular independence, was "coy and difficult to win." Today, mid the tremendous upheaval of world war, and in the new State of Eire, is presented the strange and pleasing spectacle of Dublin refusing point blank to leave the Union, although invited to adventure on the path of Home Rule. At the time of writing their policy is clearly proving right. In Northern Ireland there is stirring the breath of new life. The story of progress in Wales and Scotland is told below by "nationals" of both, while from Dublin I have been favoured with some notes, written fortunately for myself in English and not in Gaelic, though the Branch note-heading is printed in that language.

In the reminiscences of Union work in South Wales which T.A. Davies, of Cardiff, has been good enough to contribute, the liveliest episode is that of 1918 when the branch lived up to its reputation as the fighting squad, rejected executive counsel, and pushed a wages claim to a successful issue. As the occupant of the presidential chair of the Union at the time I had to apply the brake, but none the less I admired the eager spirit of the branch. When, however, a strike became an imminent possibility there were anxious telephonic consultations between the President in London and the General Secretary in Manchester. The result was that Richardson was bound on his visit to Cardiff by an instruction to do all he could to avert a strike, which would have been a serious setback to the national wages movement then in progress. Writing long after the event one can congratulate South Wales on the success of its bold front, but nevertheless reflect that if the employers had not been so amenable and if a strike had occurred the tale would have been very different. Probably, faced by a strike, the proprietors would have become militant, and the federated proprietors in the country might have become involved. Then the Union, unprepared to face the strain of a general strike or lock-out, would have suffered a serious reverse. The experience at York gave little encouragement. All that was implicit in the South Wales crisis in 1918, but Davies is entitled to his tale of triumph, and here it is embodied in the story of a fine branch:

I joined the staff of the *South Wales News*, Cardiff, in 1911, and had not been in the office many hours before one of my new colleagues asked me if I were a member of the Union. On my answering in the negative, he said, " Oh, you will have to join the Union. We are all members in this office." Whereupon I joined up. This shows how keen the Union spirit was in South Wales in those days. I had the idea that the Union could not benefit me; that, although my wage was ridiculously small, I had only to prove to my employers that I was worth more to get a substantial increase. It was not long before I discovered my mistake. I was seriously thinking of handing in my notice when I had a stroke of luck. I obtained a highly sensational scoop for my newspaper. It was a story which aroused national interest and, although not a word reached me from my proprietors, I discovered that they had been inundated with letters of congratulations, including one from a Cabinet minister. My reward was an increase of 5/- a week, making my wage 55/-, still less than what I was getting at 21 years of age. My gratitude for the increase was somewhat modified when the editor of the rival paper told me a few weeks later that if a member of his staff had got such a grand story for his paper he would have given him a hundred pounds! To augment my weekly wage I tried to do linage, but very soon I found out why linage was the cause of so much discord in the staffs of provincial newspapers. Because I was invariably chosen to cover all the big assignments outside Cardiff I was frequently away from the city for days and sometimes for weeks at a stretch, with the result that the London newspaper which I represented as " linage merchant " soon dispensed with my services and

appointed as my successor a sub-editor who never went out for a story but simply milked the reporters' copy as it came into the office. Later on I discovered what a barrier the linage system was to the progress of the Union—how members were not keen on wages movements because they were afraid of questioning by their employers as to their linage earnings, selfishly ignoring the fact that the linage market was extremely limited and confined only to a few lucky members of an office staff.

I had not been a member of the branch committee long before I was greatly impressed with the tremendous amount of work that was being done by W. E. Pegg, the treasurer. No limited liability company's accounts were ever kept more accurately or with such a wealth of detail as he kept the financial details of the South Wales branch. I collaborated with him for nearly 20 years and I unhesitatingly say, after visiting most of the branches in England, Scotland, and Wales, that Pegg was the best branch official of the Union I ever met. With Celtic impetuosity I would frequently urge drastic action in cases that came before the branch committee but Pegg would invariably advise the members to move cautiously and diplomatically, and I generally had to admit, after due consideration, that he was right. On reflection, however, I am bound to admit that Pegg was the last man I would choose as a partner for a lion-shooting expedition, a fact I realised in more than one local wages campaign. Pegg had two handicaps as a branch official, and as a member of the N.E.C. and one of these was responsible for his refusal to allow himself to be nominated for the presidency of the Union, an honour which he richly deserved. He spoke far too rapidly and his enunciation was so poor that it was very difficult to catch what he said. This was a great pity because in matter his speeches were always good. I had a blazing row with a delegate at the London A.D.M. because he interrupted a speech by Pegg with the remark, "Mr. President, we are wasting time; we can't understand a word this gentleman is saying." I resented the insult and told the interrupter that "he didn't understand the King's English."

Pegg's other handicap was his atrocious handwriting. I recall an amusing incident in connection with these two handicaps. One night when I was on duty at the *South Wales News* office, Jimmy Walker, our leader writer, came to me and told me he had had a letter from Pegg about some Union matter but that "he couldn't d—n well read it." I suggested that he should ring Pegg up and ask him what the letter was all about. "Nay, lad," replied Jimmy in his booming Yorkshire voice, "that's no use. I've just done that. I told him I couldn't read his handwriting, and now I'm d——d if I could understand a word he said on the telephone."

Territorially the South Wales branch was in those days easily the largest branch in the kingdom. It included the six counties in South Wales, Monmouthshire, and the city of Hereford. With members scattered over such a widespread area it will readily be seen what an immense amount of work fell upon the shoulders of the branch officials, and how difficult it was to maintain interest in the Union, especially among those who by reason of distance and poor railway service seldom, if ever, had an opportunity of attending branch meetings. When I became secretary branch meetings were held alternately at Cardiff, Newport, and Swansea, the three places where morning and evening newspapers were published. Pegg and I agreed to hold "extra" branch meetings, and we gave up many Saturday evenings to attend these meetings at Merthyr, Aberdare, Pontypool, Newbridge, and other places. Once I decided to hold a meeting for our mid-Wales members. The place chosen was Builth Wells. It was only 70 miles away from Cardiff, but owing to the fact that no trains ran on Sundays it took me from 8 o'clock on Saturday morning till 11 o'clock on Monday to make the journey and get back to the office. I wonder if this is a record for time spent by a branch official in attending a Union meeting.

By 1916, nearly two years after the outbreak of the Great War, the cost of living had grown to an alarming extent in South Wales. Almost every class of workers had been granted increases to meet the rising

prices of essential commodities, but the wages of journalists had remained at their pre-war level. The men were getting desperate and at the branch meetings clamoured for drastic action. Some of the most vocal were the "linage merchants." They had never been amongst the most faithful attendants at branch meetings in peace time. Owing to the war their "outside earnings" had almost entirely vanished and for the first time they knew, what their less fortunate colleagues had known for a long time, how difficult it was to live on the bare office wage. I had been to my first A.D.M. at Sheffield as a delegate in 1915 and there I realised the difficulties attached to a national movement for increased wages. I therefore decided on my return to South Wales to devote all my energies to working up an agitation in favour of local action. I succeeded in getting the support of a number of adventurous crusaders and we decided to launch a wages campaign. Our first effort was a dismal failure. We asked the employers to meet us, pointing out that they had met the mechanical workers and had given them an increase which put them on a much higher wage level than their journalist employees, but met with a blank refusal. My next move was to instruct my "band of adventurers" to start a "whispering campaign," and very soon I knew it had reached the ears of the employers that the journalists were so incensed at their treatment that they were determined to carry out a lightning strike. When I thought the "whispering" had had the desired effect I again wrote to the employers asking for a meeting.

In a few days I received a reply telling me that the employers would receive a deputation and fixing a date. We had thus won our battle for "recognition," and could only hope that something tangible would result from the forthcoming meeting. Pegg was very anxious that we should have the support of the N.E.C. in our action. We agreed and it was decided to ask the late Walter Meakin to accompany the deputation and state our case to the employers. Meakin at once agreed and, coming to Cardiff, we primed him with all the facts to place before the bosses. It was a lively meeting. Meakin put up a good case on our behalf; in fact I thought it was unanswerable. The employers' representatives contended that they paid as good wages as any other papers of equal standing in the country and, in any case, to quote one of their speakers, we were trying to put our hands into an empty hat, depleted through increased cost of news print, dwindling advertisement revenue, and so on. One incident was recalled by J. W. T. Ley, who was a member of the deputation. In the discussion that followed Meakin's opening statement I had a brush with the late Mr. Read, who was then my editor, and who represented our proprietors at the meeting. I was dealing with some of the hard cases in the area and quoted the ridiculously low wage paid to the *South Wales News* representative in the important district of Merthyr Tydfil. Mr. Read's bristles were up at once and he interrupted me with the remark, "But, surely, T.A., you can't expect me to pay ——, who has only just been appointed at Merthyr, the same wage as I paid ——, who has been there for 25 years." I replied, "No, Mr. Read, but do you mind saying what you paid —— after his 25 years' service?" When Mr. Read said he thought it was 35/- I banged my fist on the table and said to my respected editor, "Then all I have to say, Mr. Read, is that it was a d——d shame." Mr. Read was a forgiving soul and he never admonished me for my somewhat cheeky outburst.

In the end the employers refused our application, but a few days later the men were told individually in all the morning and evening newspaper offices to apply for increases. We all got an increase of 5/- a week. We formed the opinion at the time that the employers had taken this extraordinary course in order to try to remove from our minds the impression that we had gained a Union triumph! The increase brought my wage up to £3 a week.

The next local wages campaign was launched under somewhat peculiar circumstances. Sometime in 1918, at a branch meeting at Cardiff, E. R. Evans, who subsequently succeeded me on the N.E.C., was highly critical of the Union for its tardiness in securing better conditions for its members,

and very rightly pointed to the increases obtained by other Unions on behalf of their members. Like myself, E.R. is a turbulent Welshman, and he made a vigorous attack on the N.E.C. for its alleged lack of "guts" in pressing for better wages. I asked him, "what do you suggest we should do?" "Take local action, as we did before," he replied, "and demand an all-round increase of £1 a week." I could not refrain from smiling at the audacity of my fellow Celt, but at length said, "Very well. I will call a special meeting of the branch for a week to-night and, if the members convince me by turning up in substantial numbers that they are really interested in getting an increase of wages, I am prepared to go on with it." This was the genesis of what I consider to be the greatest triumph ever achieved by the South Wales branch. We had a bumper attendance at the meeting and I was quite convinced that the rank and file were in dead earnest in putting forward the demand. When I asked what would be the next step in the event of the employers turning down our application there were not a few who urged strike action. Ultimately it was decided to hold a mass meeting at Cardiff and to send out a three line whip. A number of the Cardiff members offered hospitality to those who had to travel long distances.

Richardson had just been appointed general secretary and the branch committee decided to invite him to attend the meeting, and he readily consented to do so. H.M.R. came down on the night before the meeting and met the branch committee. He was evidently very much impressed with our enthusiasm and promised to throw his whole weight into the fight. Alas! when the meeting was in progress a telegram arrived for Richardson which considerably damped our ardour. It was from the President, F. J. Mansfield, instructing Richardson to inform the branch that they would considerably prejudice the national demand which the N.E.C. was about to launch, if they persisted in pressing their local demand. Richardson was in a quandary. On the one hand he was convinced from what we told him that we stood a great chance of securing a great Union triumph, in which he, as the newly-appointed general secretary, would share, and on the other hand he realised that the telegram from the President was in the nature of a command, which he could not ignore. Very reluctantly, as we all saw, he informed us that he would have to read the telegram to the mass meeting on the following day and speak in favour of the instructions given him by the President. Pegg, out of loyalty to the President and the N.E.C., decided that he would have to support Richardson, and this in spite of the fact that he had been an enthusiastic supporter of branch action. We argued the matter for more than two hours and ultimately the committee by ten votes to one decided to recommend the mass meeting the next day to proceed with the branch demand.

At the mass meeting over 80 were present, and we should have had a three figure crowd but for the fact that the Swansea and district men, owing to the distance and the heavy expense had decided to hold their own meeting on the previous night, when they instructed the late Awstin Davies to represent them at Cardiff, arming him with proxies to be cast whichever way he thought fit after hearing the debate. Elliss Hughes, one of the Union stalwarts, moved the adoption of the committee's recommendations in favour of local action, and I seconded. Both our speeches were greeted with cheers, and there was no doubt about the temper of the meeting. Then Richardson rose and very naturally the meeting, apart from the committee members, expected that he was going to speak in favour of the resolution. After paying tribute to the enthusiasm of the members in turning up in such force to a Sunday meeting he threw his bombshell. He read the President's telegram and then urged his hearers to act on the advice it contained. His speech was received in almost dead silence, and I never felt more sorry for any man in my life, because I knew that he was spoiling to be in our fight. Pegg followed on the same lines, urging patience and faith in the N.E.C. The more cautious members were evidently impressed by Pegg's declaration that if we decided to fight we would have to fight without the backing of

the Union as a body, but the fighting element was furious and there were some lively speeches from the " local actionists."

When the vote was taken after a three hours debate the resolution was defeated by six votes. As a matter of fact it would have been carried by a majority of eight had not Pegg succeeded, before the division was taken, in carrying a resolution in favour of excluding the Swansea proxies on the ground that there was a possibility that the men would not have given Awstin Davies a mandate to cast their votes as he thought fit had they been aware of the new circumstances. Awstin was almost speechless with indignation after the meeting, and I foresaw trouble, but I little realised at that moment that he would take action which was destined completely to reverse the decision.

I had not long to wait before the trouble I expected from Awstin Davies developed. He wrote to inform me that his members were so disgusted with the " insult " offered them at the Cardiff meeting that they had met and passed a resolution unanimously deciding to resign from the Union *en bloc*. To the letter they all appended their signatures. This was a serious matter, as the Swansea section of the branch was numerically strong and embraced some of the most active and enthusiastic members of the Union. I summoned a special meeting of the branch emergency committee, at which the members urged Pegg to ignore the decision of the mass meeting and to go on with the local demand, but our worthy treasurer was adamant, and the meeting adjourned without arriving at any decision. That night I wrote to Elliss Hughes, who was then branch chairman, tendering my resignation as secretary forthwith. I also told him that I was seriously thinking of severing my connection with the Union and that I had no doubt that my lead would be followed by many of the Cardiff members.

Next day Hughes persuaded me to withhold my resignation, and to call another meeting of the committee. This was the fifth meeting we had had in five days. At the meeting Hughes brought all his quietly persuasive powers to bear on Pegg, with the result that the old warrior not only capitulated, but undertook to draft a letter to the employers setting forth our demands and asking for a meeting. Next day he brought me the draft. It was a masterpiece of logical reasoning. I at once posted it to the employers and at the same time wrote and informed Richardson of what we had done. I pointed out that if we had adhered to the resolution passed by the mass meeting it would inevitably have led to the disruption of the branch.

In a few days I received a reply from the employers in which they agreed to receive a deputation. Richardson, to whom I had written, reiterated the advice that we had better wait for the national movement. I thought it wise not to mention to any of my colleagues the correspondence with Richardson until we knew the result of the meeting with the employers. Our deputation to the employers comprised the late W. E. Pegg, the late John Hopkins (Newport) and myself. We had quite a friendly discussion, and were asked to retire to another room while the employers were considering their decision. I did not feel in the least hopeful and when only ten minutes had elapsed before we were summoned to the Boardroom I felt absolutely certain that the employers had decided summarily to reject our demand. Imagine my feelings, therefore, when the chairman told us that, while the employers had decided not to grant us an all-round increase of £1 a week, they had decided to give £1 a week to every man with five years service and 10/- a week to men with a lesser period of service. They made this offer, the Chairman explained, because they thought it would be fairer to the senior men in their employ. I felt like shouting for joy, but managed to keep a straight face and tell the employers that we thanked them for their offer and would place it before a general meeting of the branch. The cup of tea that Pegg, Hopkins, and myself had that afternoon was real nectar. While we sipped it we decided not to divulge the terms of the offer to anyone until the meeting. I did not inform Richardson of our triumph, but somehow or other he got wind of the fact that we were holding another mass meeting and shortly before

this was due to commence I received a wire from him telling me that we "could not expect support from the N.E.C. if we decided to take drastic action in support of the local demand." How I chuckled when I read the wire!

Incidentally I can now reveal that I never divulged the contents of the wire to anyone, and I conveniently forgot to read to my committee Richardson's letter repeating his advice to the branch "to be patient." The meeting was the most enthusiastic Union gathering ever held in South Wales. Ninety per cent. of those present were quite unaware that the committee had taken upon themselves to override the majority decision of the historic mass meeting and to proceed with the local demand, while the secret that the employers had made us a substantial offer had been well kept. If fell to my lot as secretary to announce the terms of the offer and there was a storm of applause when I finished. One member only offered opposition, but he was quickly silenced, and a formal resolution that the offer be accepted with thanks was carried with acclamation. On the following pay day over 150 of our members found their packets substantially heavier, by far the large majority to the extent of £1 a week. Our victory had a most stimulating effect on the whole Union and helped very considerably in promoting the success of the subsequent national wages movements. Richardson's letter of congratulation was ample compensation for the most worrying time I ever had during my period of service as branch secretary.

For the National Arbitration the branch was asked to send three witnesses, and those chosen were the late John Hopkins (Newport), Harry Morgan (Bargoed), and myself. Richardson was in great form that day. His opening of our case, which occupied nearly an hour, was a brilliant piece of advocacy, and his skilful cross-examination of the employers' witnesses aroused my admiration; in fact, although more than 20 years have elapsed, I distinctly remember thinking at the time what a pity it was that Richardson had not chosen the bar as a profession. He proved himself to be a really great advocate. There were many occasions on which I profoundly disagreed with his political views, but I yield to no one in my admiration of his outstanding ability both as a journalist and as a trade union negotiator. One of our witnesses made some most damaging admissions as to linage earnings in his district—so damaging, I thought, that our case was almost certain to be lost. In order better to control my feelings I left the table where I had been sitting next to Richardson and went and occupied a chair at the back of the room, where I indulged in some unutterable thoughts. Richardson, who evidently felt as I did, joined me and disconsolately asked, "What do you think of it, T.A.?" I replied, "Pretty hopeless, isn't it." Richardson's next question was, "What had we better do?" I thought for a moment and then said: "Call me as the next witness, but put my proof of evidence on one side and let me tell my story my own way." Richardson agreed, and I went into the witness box. I told how in South Wales up to 1916 reporters and sub-editors other than chiefs on the morning and evening papers were paid from 25/- to £3, and in reply to the contention of the late Mr. G. E. Stembridge, manager of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, that there was no profession in the world where a man's value is more promptly recognised than in journalism, I stated that, although I had to do most of the big stories for wealthy and influential newspapers like the *South Wales News* and the *South Wales Echo*, my employers assessed my value up to 1916 at less than £3 a week, out of which I had to pay rent, insurance, maintain and educate a wife and family of four children, and at the same time keep up a good social position. I remember being very sarcastic when I told of reporters who, obeying the "rule of the office," had to attend the brilliant banquets held in the city of Cardiff in regulation evening dress and pictured their thoughts when they realised that most of the waiters who served them were much better off than themselves.

Then, as I subsequently learned, I made a lucky hit. I drew a comparison between the wages paid to journalists and dock workers at Cardiff, Newport, and Swansea, and pointed out that at one time, when my wage-

was only 45/-, I lived next door to a dock labourer whose average earnings came to £8 a week. I said that I would like to see linage abolished altogether because of the friction it caused among the staffs of the newspapers, but I had been instructed by my branch to present a reasoned statement in defence of retaining linage and this I did. When I had finished, Richardson's whispered, "Well done," told me I had not failed him. Late that night when the witnesses were discussing the day's proceedings at their hotel, Walter Meakin, who was the Union arbitrator, joined us, and, calling me aside, said, "I want to tell you something in confidence, T.A." He had been dining with Sir Thomas Munro and Mr. Meredith Whittaker, and at the dinner table Sir Thomas had said, "The witness who impressed me the most was that man Davies from Cardiff. Some time ago I conducted an inquiry for the Government into wages and conditions of dock workers in South Wales, and the figures Davies quoted were quite correct." Meakin added "If we get an award in our favour it will be largely due to you, T.A."

One reason, I think, for the success achieved by the South Wales branch was the fact that we paid a great deal of attention to developing the social side. We frequently held dances, smoking concerts and whist drives in order not only to bring the members together but to interest their women folk in the affairs of the Union. At these gatherings we always tried to impress on the ladies the importance of seeing that their husbands or sweethearts regularly attended Union meetings. We were also fortunate in inducing civic functionaries on several occasions to give receptions to our members and their friends. I also attribute our success very largely to the fact that we had on the whole some excellent employers. Their reluctance at the outset to recognise the Union was not due to antipathy on their part towards our organisation, but to their loyalty to what at that time was the fixed policy of the employers' federation. One of our best friends was the late Sir William Davies, a director and editor-in-chief of the *Western Mail*, Cardiff. Another was Mr. John Duncan, chairman of directors of the *South Wales News* and the *South Wales Echo*. I served under two generations of the Duncan family. The first generation were good employers. They rarely "sacked" a man, in fact it was commonly said, "If you can get on the *South Wales News* you are right for life, provided you put up with low wages." This was perfectly true. The next generation of Duncans paid their men most generously, and gave them fixity of tenure. The employer we most frequently met at wage negotiations was Sir Robert Webber, managing director of the *Western Mail*. Some of my colleagues on the N.E.C. thought him brusque and dictatorial, but, knowing him personally for a number of years, I knew that his heart was in the right place, and would always bet that when it came to the employers deciding what should be done with the Union claim, his vote would be cast on "the side of the angels."

I have referred to some of the good employers, but there were others. The editor of an evening paper had been treating his staff very badly and they asked me to intervene on their behalf. I interviewed the gentleman and he was very rude, telling me not to interfere with his business and that he would do what he d——d well liked. When he became decidedly personal my Welsh blood rose to boiling point and in plain language I told him what I thought of him. Then I played my trump card and told him that I had just come from a meeting of his staff and that they had pledged themselves to carry out a lightning strike unless he apologised to his chief reporter for particularly offensive conduct, and promised to improve conditions in the office generally, "You know what that means," I added significantly. "There is a royal visit to the town to-morrow and you won't have a man in the office to get out your paper." He was almost speechless with rage, but ultimately calmed down and, realising that I made no idle threat, agreed to my demands.

The son of a village schoolmaster, T. A. Davies became printer's devil at the *Brecon Beacon* at the age of fourteen. Eight years

later he was managing editor of the *Brecon County Times*. At Cardiff he became the fighting leader in many a Union campaign. He was well versed in the whole range of journalism; an effective speaker and a persuasive personality. At the Cardiff A.D.M., 1920, he was head of the poll in the election of three national members of the Executive; and at Nottingham, 1922, he became President. The Branch was fortunate in having such a secretary, conjointly with a treasurer of the exceptional qualities of W. E. Pegg, who from 1908 to 1936 held that post and for many years was territorial representative on the N.E.C. He was assistant editor of the *Western Mail* and it was said of him that he was one of those who stood to gain least and lose most by Union loyalty, but he fought the good fight. He had his own distinctive views. Quaintly enough he condemned official longevity and argued the value of changing officers to enlarge administrative experience. It might be claimed, he urged, that the N.U.J., by creating a new sense of companionship and comradeship, promoted a better realisation of professional responsibility. He was the first member of the Union to receive the dual status of honorary and life membership.

The best introduction to Scotland's part in Union development is a glance at some of the stalwarts she has sent to share in its government. J. H. Aitken, whose account of the planting of the Union north of the Border is given below, has an enviable record. A tall man of fine presence, with the gift of speech, he was always an acceptable and successful preacher of the Union message. Joining the N.E.C. in 1912 he resigned in 1915 to go on war service. In 1926 he returned to the Executive after the collapse of the General Strike, and devoted his energies to the re-establishment of the battered branches in Scotland. He became the father of the Scottish Newspapers Office and Federated Chapels. Tom Dickson stated that Aitken, at the time chief reporter on a Scottish daily, deliberately hazarded his career to maintain the decrees of the Emergency Committee in the General Strike. When Aitken retired from the N.E.C. in 1938 Glasgow paid him tribute. P. J. Dollan, the first journalist Lord Provost and a member of the Branch, in the best style of pawky Scottish humour, said: "If it were possible to have a better journalistic Lord Provost than the one you have, you should have Jimmy Aitken." Like some others of us Aitken is too active to allow retirement to quench his interest in the affairs of a busy life. Hence we find him in 1943 editing a lively little four page quarto, entitled,

The Scottish Journalist, and delivering the most effective speech at the A.D.M. on the subject of N.E.C. " rules of conduct," in relation to the rights of minority members.

Dickson was one of the Union hierarchy's brightest ornaments. His early death was a grievous loss to the Union; and more than that it cut short a career of promise in Parliament. His work in journalism, and his power in the Union gave evidence of his value in national service. From the Lanark County Council he graduated to Westminster as member for the Lanark Division. His victory over Captain Walter Elliot was one of the outstanding contests of the General Election of 1923. An opposing baillie bore witness to Dickson's character when he said the combat was one of the most gallant and courteous ever fought. When on the *Scotsman* Dickson was the solitary Union member on the reporting staff, and in the lean years he was an ardent missionary. He was one of our most effective speakers, and had a great gift of homely simile. During one of our A.D.M. debates on affiliation to the printers, when there was a tendency to hesitate, Dickson cried: " Don't wait for the torn pants before you tackle the bull dog." He greeted the laughter and applause that rewarded this sally with a quiet smile of satisfaction; as I, an opponent, bent towards him with a word of appreciation. The experiences of a harsh youth had not soured the humour of a genial spirit. Among other Scottish leaders I can mention here just one more—D. M. Elliot, of Edinburgh. When, as a young member on the staff of a paper in that City, he found that pay was not up to Union scales, he and four colleagues joined the Union, demanded the proper increase and got it. From that time he was an active member. Skill in the tasks of administration proved his strong point. The struggle to better the lot of the poorly paid journalists on the Scottish weeklies claimed his special attention, and he took an effective part in developing Union benefits—in particular superannuation, death benefit, and the raising of the income limit for compulsory State Insurance. He was elected President at the 1942 A.D.M., but unhappily what should have proved a serviceable term of office was interrupted by a dispute in the N.E.C., which led to his resignation very soon after taking the chair. That unfortunate breach was widely regretted, for it deprived the Union, for the time at least, of a very capable head. Fortunately, Elliot is now in harness again and one is confident in expecting from him much valuable service. Although he can be ruthless in the application of his principles he has a fund of common sense and

experience which is of high worth in counsel. Now follows Aitken's sketch:

My earliest recollections of the N.U.J. date back to 1909 when the first branches were established in Scotland. It will always be a source of immense pride to me that I was partly instrumental in bringing the Union to Scotland. Indeed I narrowly escaped becoming the founder of a Scottish trade union for journalists. I cannot claim to be a foundation member of the N.U.J. as I was only a boy of 16 then and had just joined the old *Dundee Advertiser* as a telephone clerk, attached to the editorial department, but it wasn't long before I became an enthusiastic and active trade unionist. The conditions then prevailing were simply appalling. Young fellows entering journalism today will scarcely credit the conditions under which reporters then worked even on an important daily newspaper. For long and strenuous hours the maximum pay I ever received in that office was 25/- a week. I started at a wage of 17/6 a week, and made a regular practice of making application for an increase every three months. One quarter my application was forestalled. I received a letter from the managing director telling me that the directors, as a mark of appreciation of the good work I was doing, had been pleased to increase my " salary " by one shilling a week. It was my thanks for this munificent increase that led to my dismissal from that office very soon afterwards.

Meanwhile I was frequently advised by older colleagues to join the Institute of Journalists and to air my grievances there. Even then, however, I could not see much prospect of improvement through the Institute. My managing director and other " bosses " were members of the Institute and, had I attended a meeting to complain of conditions in the office, I was liable to find one of them presiding, or at least sitting next to me. What prospect of redress had I in these circumstances? I could see none. There were two other juniors in the office, Frank Dodson, whom I have since lost sight of, and John Gordon, now editor of the *Sunday Express*. They were as discontented as I was, and frequently we discussed, with the earnestness possible only to extreme youth, what could be done to improve matters. After long cogitation, and much wordy discussion, we solemnly came to the conclusion that the only way in which journalism could be made fit for journalists was to organise on a trade union basis. While we were sounding some of our older colleagues to see what measure of support we could secure from them we began to hear vague whispers of a body in Manchester which called itself the National Union of Journalists. We made inquiries and contacted G. H. Lethem, then president of the N.U.J., and discovered to our delight that he was a brother Scot. We asked for literature and studied it carefully. We decided that this new organisation was being run on precisely the lines we were contemplating and decided to throw in our lot with it. Nothing short of a branch in Dundee would satisfy us, so we asked Lethem if he would come north and address the Dundee men. It was characteristic of Lethem, to whom the Union owes more than to almost any other of the original pioneers, that he at once agreed. It was equally characteristic of him that he stipulated that the meeting should be held in the afternoon so that he might go on to Glasgow the same night and endeavour to establish a second Scottish branch there. Unknown to us one or two Glasgow journalists had already become Nujjers and were attached to the Manchester branch.

With considerable trepidation we three youngsters in Dundee sent out a circular calling a meeting of all journalists in the city and backed this up by a personal canvas. None of us was more than 18 years of age, but we had great faith, and our faith was justified. Lethem attended the meeting and spoke in his quiet convincing manner of the value of co-operation, of the bad conditions prevailing, and of the hope that trade union organisation held out for substantial improvement. There and then 17 members joined the Union and the first Scottish branch was established. For my pains I was appointed to the thankless job of branch treasurer, responsible for collecting the subs., which at that time amounted to 2/- per month.

I often found it exceedingly difficult to collect even that sum, but the branch flourished and expanded until the General Strike of 1926, when the two daily papers published in the city amalgamated and placed a complete ban on trade unionism among their employees. That killed the branch for the time. Some years later, however, we succeeded in re-establishing a modest branch in Dundee for the free lances and district men of other Scottish national newspapers outside the Thomson group. In spite of trials and tribulations that small branch continued to maintain the Union flag in Dundee.

On the evening of the day on which the Dundee branch was formed Glasgow also set up a branch after hearing Lethem's eloquent plea. Most of the members were drawn from the *Daily Record* staff, and they had a long and an uphill battle before they broke down prejudice in other offices and made the branch truly representative of the profession in the second city of the Empire. Both branches, however, were missionary organisations. They spread the gospel of trade unionism for journalists all over the country, and soon there were flourishing branches in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Central Scotland. Missionary work was mainly undertaken by enthusiasts who preached in season and out of season in all parts of the country into which their work carried them. A little of that missionary spirit among our members to-day would work wonders, and would be far more effective in recruiting non-members than half-a-dozen official organisers. I say that without any disrespect to our present officials, whose fine work I know and appreciate, but the personal enthusiasm of the individual member is far more effective than the appeals of those whose job it is to act as recruiting sergeants.

Eighteen months after the foundation of the Dundee and Glasgow branches I transferred to Glasgow, when I was immediately appointed honorary organising secretary, and began an exceedingly busy but gloriously happy and fruitful period. It was amazing in those days of 1911 and 1912 to find how " snooty " some of these local journalists, earning £1 and 25/- a week and even less, could be about the loss of prestige they would suffer if they associated themselves with anything savouring of trade unionism. But stress of economic circumstances compelled many of them to revise their views. It is difficult to maintain professional dignity when the grocer and the butcher are dunning for their bills and the tailor refuses to supply a new suit until the old one is paid for. Slowly but surely we made progress and the Union was beginning to become a power with which Scottish newspaper proprietors had to reckon when war broke out in 1914. Many of our most active young members joined the armed forces, and Union activity was in abeyance to a large extent until hostilities ceased.

The Union in Scotland owes much to the stalwarts who put in so much hard work in these pioneering days when the active member ran real risks of economic hardship because of his enthusiasm. Indeed, when I went to Glasgow first I was warned by some of my new colleagues not to let it be known that I was a member of the N.U.J., as the management had threatened to " sack " any man who joined the Union. Actually when I was being interviewed for the job by the managing editor he had asked me if I knew any members of his staff. When I replied that I had been in association with some of the more active members of the Union in his office his only comment was: " So you are a member of the N.U.J. You'll find yourself at home here. There's a perfect nest of them in this office." I soon learned that his words were true, for I found quite a number of keen Nujjers in the *Daily Record* office, and in happy co-operation with them was proud to help to lay the foundations of the Union in Scotland. Incidentally, the fact that I had been engaged after the editor knew, on my own confession, that I was an ardent trade unionist, helped us tremendously in our recruiting campaign, and some of the more timorous members of the staff were persuaded to join.

Outstanding among these pioneers I would place David Welch, who later became editor of the Scottish *Weekly Record*. Small, but stockily built, and with a walrus moustache that irresistibly reminded one of the

comedian Harry Tate, he had a quiet, pawky humour with a pungent Scots flavour, and the kindliest heart that I have ever known in any man. David, who alas is with us no more, was imbued with the true trade union spirit, and it was his driving energy and enthusiasm that carried the Glasgow branch through its early trials. He became the first Scottish representative on the N.E.C., where his wise counsel was appreciated at its true worth. I was chosen over the heads of better men, to succeed David Welch as National Executive member for the West of Scotland. I was then only 21 years of age, and the youngest member of the N.E.C., but my association with such stalwarts of the Union as Watts, Spencer, Lethem, Richardson, Meakin, Mansfield, O'Donovan and Jay, to mention only a few of the early giants of the movement, was all that was required to confirm me in my fervid adhesion to the principles of trade unionism. As an instance of youthful enthusiasm I may mention in passing that I actually devoted two days of my honeymoon to attending the 1913 A.D.M. in Manchester—a shock to my wife that prepared her for many similar absences on Union business in after years. My enthusiasm for the Union has in no way diminished with the passing of the years; rather the reverse.

Another of the early enthsiasts in Glasgow was a namesake of my own, although no relation, W. H. Aitken, now living in retirement in his native Aberdeenshire. Aitken, who spent almost his entire journalistic life on weekly newspapers, was never a voluble member, but when he did rise in a branch meeting and, peering nervously through his thick glasses, proferred advice or criticism, he was invariably listened to with keen attention, for he had a clear thinking mind and a passionate love for the N.U.J., and his counsel was almost without exception the best that could be followed. In striking contrast was Jimmy Flanagan, well-known in Co-operative Press circles. He spoke frequently and eloquently, with a keen Irish wit that never left him at a loss for a word, and with a happy gift of repartee that never left a sting. Another volatile Irishman of those days who lost his life in the war, before he reached his prime, was Gerald O'Reilly, who for several years in the early days in Scotland was the Glasgow branch secretary. He had a burning passion for the cause of the Union, but his temperament was so irascible that never a meeting passed without his falling foul of someone. Frequently he would storm out of a meeting, shouting his resignation from behind the loudly-banged door, and vowing never to return to a branch meeting. But each fresh meeting found him in his place again, ready to carry on his job for the N.U.J., and, in spite of his quarrelsome habit, he was so lovable a character, and his enthusiasm was so transparently honest, that one could only ignore his weakness and admire the sterling work that he accomplished for the benefit of his fellow journalists.

Then there was James Gibson, familiarly known to his associates as Hamish, who graduated into journalism from a railway clerk's desk by way of free-lancing. Through good times and bad he stuck faithfully to his self-imposed task of furthering the interests of the N.U.J., and during the trying period of the war it was mainly his dogged persistence and enthusiasm that maintained Union vitality at a time when it threatened to sink to its lowest ebb. After a spell on the N.E.C. he became organiser of the clerical section of the Transport and General Workers' Union in Scotland. It wasn't long before another outstanding personality joined us from the East. Tommy Dickson was probably one of the most kenspeckle figures in the Union for many years, not only in Scotland, but throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. (For English readers "kenspeckle" may be translated as "well-known, easily known"). He combined with his redoubtable qualities as a dour fighter, a sense of humour that saved many an awkward situation, and a kindly heart that could never be deaf to any appeal for help. It was almost inevitable that to him should fall the distinction of being the first President of the Union to be chosen from a Scottish branch. His greatest service to the Union in Scotland was not performed while he occupied the presidential chair, but during the trying period of the General Strike. Scotland was more or less isolated, and had in the main to make its own decisions and fight

its own battles. It was then that Dickson's outstanding qualities as a leader shone most brightly. Practically every day he travelled from his home in Larkhall to Glasgow to attend branch meetings. It was mainly due to his exertions that Glasgow emerged from the ordeal so triumphantly and those of us who were closely associated with him at that time will always remember him with admiration and affection. He was equally energetic in his efforts to restore the ravages of that disastrous time.

Those of us who were in the thick of the fight at the start are inclined to sigh for the " good old days " and to doubt if ever we shall see such men again. But we are wrong. The Union is able to-day to call on the services of men of equal calibre. There's nothing wrong with the spirit and capacity of our present day leaders. What is lacking, I think, is an intimate realisation on the part of the younger men who are now marching under the banner of the Union of the vital need for loyal service and staunch adherence to the principles of trade unionism to-day.

Scotland has always been in a peculiar position in Union negotiations as the Scottish newspaper proprietors have their own organisations. Even yet there is no agreement governing the salaries and working conditions of the men and women employed on the weekly newspapers. Frequent negotiations have taken place over a series of years with the Scottish Weekly Newspaper Proprietors' Association, and at the time of writing fresh negotiations are in progress which, it is hoped, will result in the signing of a satisfactory agreement. This does not mean that conditions on the Scottish weekly newspapers are generally bad. The best employers, and their number is substantial, observe the English agreements, and in some cases pay even better rates. There are, however, many local weeklies where conditions are deplorable, and it is to protect the interests of our members in these offices that a definite agreement is necessary.

So far as the daily newspapers in Scotland are concerned salaries and conditions, generally speaking, are satisfactory. Originally the Munro Award of 1920 did not apply to the Scottish dailies, but little difficulty was experienced in persuading the Scottish Daily Newspaper Society to sign an undertaking to observe the conditions of the Award and of subsequent agreements between the Union and the Newspaper Society, on behalf of its members who employed trade union labour. Following the General Strike of 1926 the majority of the leading newspaper groups in Scotland non-unionised their offices, but since then all of them, with the one exception of the Thomson Group in Dundee, have again reached agreement with the newspaper unions, employ union labour, and observe trade union conditions. Early in the current year difficulties developed in the Glasgow office of the Outram Group, but these were settled in friendly discussion with the N.U.J., and the firm signed an individual agreement undertaking to observe Union agreements and Union conditions. This is the only case on record of an agreement between the N.U.J. and an individual newspaper group in Scotland.

A letter in a reminiscent vein, written by J. A. Flanagan when he was made a life member, contains some little stories which may be quoted:

I linked up with the Union (he said) when the Glasgow branch was formed. The first meeting was held in the Religious Institution Rooms. It was a good and enthusiastic meeting, but not nearly so sociable as the committee meeting for which we adjourned to another place with a less chilling reputation. After the committee meeting had lasted about an hour and there was only about a quarter to go before closing time, the secretary—a chap called Sandilands who had come from one of the Manchester papers—suddenly remembered that the Executive was meeting that night in Manchester, and it was thought proper to send a message intimating the creation of a new branch. It was decided that his draft telegram was a washout. We all had a hand in its improvement and finally we sent off this message: " Glasgow Branch successfully floated." It was brief, but complete and accurate.

We had two crises in the Glasgow Branch. About the beginning of 1914 some of the lads in the Rothermere office thought something should be done about wages, and some in other offices agreed. After discussion at several meetings it was decided to ask the editor for a deputation to be received to hear our request that "trained and experienced" men on the reporting and sub-editing staffs should have their salaries increased to bring them out of the scope of the Insurance Act—which meant they should be raised to something above £160 per annum. As the prospect of war grew more serious one man who would have benefited by the rise asked me to stop the secretary writing, and then when war seemed inevitable the Rothermere office men asked for the matter to be adjourned *sine die* as they were satisfied that they would all get sacked if they dared to ask for a rise, and that some would be sacked in any case on the usual plea of economies forced on by the war. Some wanted the request made "and d——n the consequences," but it was agreed to delay. The spokesman for delay, Gerald O'Reilly, went into the Army, got a commission, and was, if I remember correctly, the first officer among Glasgow journalists to be killed. A few months later we did make our request to the proprietors of the Rothermere papers and others, and it was turned down. We found at that time that one of Scotland's most highly reputed papers had only three men on the staff (apart from chiefs, literary editors, and others of the "editor" grade) whose salaries were above £160. Before I left Glasgow in 1918 the standard for the subs. and reporters on the Rothermere papers was £6 10s., for daily men.

The second crisis was about 1917. Some of the "advanced" members, including Tommy Dickson, afterwards President of the Union, had been very critical of the Executive for some things they had done or were not doing. They requisitioned a special meeting of the Branch to ask the Executive to begin negotiations with the Institute for joint action about wages, conditions, etc. The Executive and the Institute were at each other's throats at the time about several things. I was chairman of the Branch and found nothing in the rules that would justify my ruling the proposal out of order. We got the General Treasurer, W. Veitch, to come to our meeting, but his eloquence and logic were fruitless and the resolution was carried. The Executive, naturally, put the lid on the proposal, but at the annual election of branch officers the pro-Institute men pitched out every member of the committee who had voted or spoken against the proposal. They agreed to nominate me again for the Executive when I told them any other branch could nominate me if they did not. So I continued as a member of the N.E.C. till I came to Manchester.

I remember only one serious crisis in the Manchester Branch and that was over the appointment of C. J. Bundock as National Organiser. The Withy Grove men were the strong opponents of the appointment, and one of the special meetings about it nearly ended in a fight, or at least serious bodily injury to one of the members. The discussion was long and heated. One of the Grove men was in the throes of a wonderful oratorical flight. Johnny Clegg woke up just as the speaker was telling how his colleagues had rushed to the colours to defend the country. Johnny, rising to a point of order, informed the chairman that these lads "were all conscripts." His safe arrival home was almost convincing proof that the age of miracles had not passed.

After the Newcastle A.D.M. Jimmy Haslam, Con O'Leary, Billy Holliday and I had planned to spend the week-end at Whitley Bay, but on the Saturday morning when the meeting was nearing its close, we all discovered that we were "broke," and that it would tax our resources sufficiently to collect a drink on the way to Manchester. O'Leary was in a mood of happy jubilation when I saw him in the Press Club on the following Monday and he whispered: "Wasn't it a good thing we didn't spend the week-end up yonder? Fancy your name and mine in hotel registers at a week-end when there were 30 farm fires in the district supposed to be started by the Sinn Feiners." Probably we were lucky. The tit-bit at the Nottingham A.D.M. was when young Leatherland, who had been comparatively quiet at the Manchester Branch meetings, opened

the discussion on the annual report by rolling Central London in the mud for its arrears of contributions. London had a motion on the agenda which we wanted to "bust" and Leatherland thought it would be as well to put London on the floor without waiting till the motion was reached.

I was a member of the Institute when the Glasgow Branch of the Union was started and kept on for a year or two in the hope that there might be some sort of re-constitution of the Institute and an amalgamation. That did not happen, but members who stuck to the Institute hard and fast have benefited by the work of the Union. About eight or nine years ago the Institute people were sending me some of their propaganda literature and pressing me to rejoin. I replied that I left the Institute because it was doing nothing for the working journalist and I did not see any evidence that it had changed in that respect. The usefulness of the Union has been proved time and again. It is needed now and will probably be needed still more when the War is over.

Although some impression was made in Ireland in the very early days of the Union by certain of our missionaries, who returned the compliment paid by some Celtic saints to this island a few centuries before, the Union gained no firm position there for a good many years. In 1926 enthusiasm was aroused among Dublin journalists by a visit of the National Organiser (C. J. Bundock), and a branch was formed which reached a membership of 80 in a few months. Also about that time the Northern Ireland Branch started in Belfast with 17 members. The first chairman of the Dublin Branch was J. W. Good, one of the most distinguished of Irish journalists. There are in Ireland about 700 authors and journalists, and it is believed that approximately half of these are eligible for Union membership. The Dublin Branch shows a membership of 75, but only a portion of that number has been effective. The work of the Branch in its early years was of an uphill nature, as the members lacked the stimulus of constant contact with the great mass of fellow members in Great Britain. In spite of this the Branch was strong enough to deal with grievances in wages and conditions in various newspaper offices in the City.

The establishment of a new daily paper in Dublin in 1931, the *Irish Press*, strengthened the Union considerably. The office from the start was staffed almost entirely by N.U.J. members, due largely to the enthusiasm of James O'Farrell, the night editor, who was secretary of the Branch. The management assured representatives of the Union that the staff would enjoy conditions superior to those generally obtaining on Dublin papers. In some parts of Ireland salaries as low as 25/- to 30/- a week have been reported, so the task there was similar to that faced by the Union in this country nearly forty years ago. In 1931 J. Hawke, Branch Secretary, mooted the idea of the representation of Ireland on the N.E.C. and in due time G. Coulter, M.A., took

his seat in that capacity. The present member is R. M. Fox, of Dublin, to whom I am indebted for some of the material of this record. Dublin and Belfast acted in concert in forming an Irish District Council. In 1932 the Branch affiliated to the Irish T.U.C., and the Dublin Trades and Labour Council, and later joined the Dublin Printing Trades Group. The year 1934 saw the stoppage of Dublin newspapers for some weeks as the result of a strike of transport men in one of the offices. Through its affiliation to the Printing Trades Group the N.U.J. became an ally of the strikers. Bundock went over to Dublin and spoke on College Green at a big strike meeting organised by the Group. This, remarks Fox, "was a pivotal point in the history of the Dublin Branch. Our public expression of solidarity with the printing trade workers helped to teach our own members the wider implications of trade unionism. It was, I think, the first time that journalists made common cause in organised fashion with other workers on the Dublin newspapers." The practical result was that, at the end of the dispute, the Branch had representation on the Conciliation Board set up as permanent machinery to deal with newspaper grievances. From that time the N.U.J. had recognition by the newspaper managers and the other unions. Fox writes:

The most serious threat to the existence of the N.U.J. in Ireland was on the passing of the Trade Union Act (1941) in Eire. The N.E.C. took the view that the Union should not register under this Act, but that Irish journalists should form a separate body in Ireland. At the A.D.M. following the N.E.C. recommendation the majority of the delegates supported the Dublin view that the N.U.J. should continue to function in Eire under the Act. Consequently the N.E.C., on the motion of the Irish representatives, decided to register. An immediate result of this registration was that the Dublin Branch was able to go forward, along with the Printing Trades Group, in claiming a war cost-of-living bonus. Having surmounted difficulties and dangers in earlier years the N.U.J. is now faced with greater opportunities of service.

The decision thus recorded was not reached without much anxious debate. All the English trade unions with members in Eire were affected. Under the Irish Act such unions desiring to fulfil their normal functions in Eire had to put down a deposit and get registered as a negotiating body. The deposit in the case of the N.U.J. was £1,000, but the Union simply had to place stock under the technical control of the Dublin High Court, and continue to draw its interest thereon. But if the Union became involved in any breach of Irish law and was mulcted in a fine or damages, the money could be taken from the deposit, and the deposit had to be made up again to the full figure. The N.E.C. felt that the risks attaching to this provision could not be accurately

gauged, because the possible offences were not stated and new regulations might be introduced at any time by the Eire Government under its special powers. On broad grounds the N.E.C. regarded the Act as an obnoxious piece of anti-trade union legislation designed to bring trade union activity under stricter government control. Some members of the Council saw in the Act the menace of Fascist control of industry, and opposed the proposal to take part in the working of such legislation. One obligation under the Act is to maintain a list of members at the office of the Union. Such a list is of course a normal part of the archives of every trade union, and the argument that the enactment resembled the proposed State Register of Journalists in England, which the N.U.J. so strongly opposed, was not very convincing.

In February, 1942, the N.E.C. adopted a basis of negotiation containing these points: (1) members in Eire to resign from the N.U.J. and create a trade union for themselves in Eire, to maintain cordial and reciprocal relations with the N.U.J.; (2) in place of the £1,000 deposit otherwise payable the N.U.J., as part of the settlement to provide that sum to enable the new organisation to make its deposit and apply for a negotiating licence; (3) to help the new organisation to establish an office and get going the N.U.J. to pay them £400 in the first year and £200 in the second; (4) the N.U.J. to meet benefit claims from members for two years after separation; (5) the N.U.J. to consider calls for help from the Widow and Orphan Fund for one year and in approved cases accept liability for five years; (6) N.U.J. to consider sympathetically applications for benevolent grants for one year; (7) provision of 4, 5 and 6 above to relate to members in benefit at the separation.

Representatives of the N.E.C. and of Dublin met in conference in London on March 25. The Dublin delegates said their object was to try to persuade the N.E.C. to comply with the Act and continue as a trade union in Eire. Their personal wish was to remain members of the N.U.J. J. Dennigan (Dublin) said the terms of separation suggested by the N.E.C. were very generous. Foster (President) replied that they thought the position called for some measure of generosity, but all depended on the A.D.M. P. Staunton (Dublin) said they were determined to remain in the Union although the Union withdrew from Eire. (One idea had been that members in Dublin who so desired could remain as financial members entitled to benefits, by joining the Central Office branch). Staunton put the nominal membership of the Institute of Journalists in Eire at 100 and its paying membership at 40. The effective membership of the Union there was 60. Dennigan said that in theory they had no objection to forming a new organisation in Eire as suggested and seeking to become the sole negotiating body, but in practice the Institute had been given more favourable recognition by the Government than the N.U.J. Branch enjoyed.

It would be a terribly difficult task, even with the generous help proposed, said Staunton, to establish a trade union for journalists in Eire. Journalists were a small body and would have to pay a very high subscription to provide strike and other benefits. Therefore they would require a salary standard which did not exist in Ireland at present. Already the N.U.J. subscription was very high in relation to the rates of pay. If they separated they would have to pay still more. They would like a union of their own, but felt if the N.U.J. withdrew from Eire, there would be no trade union for journalists and they would be left to the kind mercies of the Institute, which was registering under the Act. He wanted closer connection between workers in England and Eire, particularly as there

were people in Eire working to prevent that. (Although not directly stated, in the conference there was information to support the belief that Nazi influence in Eire was being used to separate Eire and British trade unionists). In view of the feeling of some in the N.U.J. that they would be glad to get out of Ireland Foster inquired about the feeling of Eire journalists to this country. The answer was: "They are not pro-German. They just don't like the British." It was pointed out that the Typographical Association had decided to register in Eire, and other unions were leaving the question to be decided by their Irish members. If the N.U.J. did not make the deposit and apply for a negotiating licence, it would not be able to negotiate wages and conditions in Eire, but in reply the opinion was advanced that office chapels would be able to do so. The conference reached a deadlock. The N.E.C. representatives were tied to the proposals set out and the Dublin delegates were not authorised to discuss any such settlement.

At the A.D.M. in April Dublin moved an instruction to the N.E.C. to register under the Irish Trade Union Act. Fox (Dublin) in an effective speech declared that the N.E.C. proposed to abandon the Dublin branch and spend £1,600 to smash the N.U.J. in Dublin, but were not prepared to keep it alive at no cost to the Union at all. He admitted that the trade unions in Eire had fought against the new Act, but now they had to accept it or go out of business. Unless the N.U.J. registered, the Institute would automatically become the body speaking for journalists in Dublin. It would help the Fascist-minded people in Dublin to kill the N.U.J. if they refused to register. In reply Bundock said the main problem was not finance but trade union principle. The N.E.C. felt that legislation putting trade unionism under State control was repugnant. It was democratic to leave it to the journalists of Ireland to determine whether they could accept an Act of that kind, and if they decided that they could the N.U.J. could help them to form a new union. Even if they registered, Bundock observed, the N.U.J. could not obtain the sole right to act for its members in Eire. If it were said that they would be leaving the field to the Institute, he replied that the Institute, which moved for the State registration of journalists in this country, was exactly the sort of body to function under the Irish Act.

An amendment, proposed by the Hertfordshire Branch, "that the Dublin position remain as at present until the operation of the Act is better appreciated, but in the event of circumstances requiring it the N.E.C. be authorised to deposit £1,000 for a trial period, the whole circumstances to be reviewed at the next A.D.M.," was carried by 70 votes against 52 for the Dublin motion, and was adopted as the substantive motion. At the end of August, 1942, the N.E.C. received an urgent request from the Dublin Branch to apply for a licence. The N.U.J. had been recognised by the Irish trade unions as the sole body representing journalists in Dublin, but was now notified that it could no longer participate in the conciliation body along with other unions. This meant a serious weakening of the N.U.J. status, which had been gained by close association with the printing trade unions. After considering reports as to the British unions which had, and had not, taken out licences in Eire, the N.E.C. decided by a majority of one (11 votes to 10) to take immediate steps to register under the Act. A rider unanimously adopted declared strong opposition to legislation of the character of the Eire Trade Union Act, and the determination of the N.E.C. to "resist by every means in its power the application of these dangerous principles to the trade union movement in this and other democratic countries."

Events moved favourably in Dublin after the registration. In February, 1943, the Branch reported a wage success, the Irish Ministry of Industry and Commerce having approved a 5/- weekly bonus to editorial staffs of papers combined in the Dublin Newspaper Managers' Committee. The General Secretary of

THE AUTHOR
President 1918; Trustee since 1919.

the N.U.J. had helped the Branch with data in support of the claim. Later came the news that the Dublin Branch had become a " nominating body " on the cultural panel for the next Irish Senate election. The branch is vigorously opposing the Institute scheme for the State registration of journalists in Eire, and is reinforced by keen interest and support from most of the counties. On the whole Union sentiment is growing in the country and there is talk of a drive for a general advance in status and conditions. During the process of recruiting the Union is making a reduction in the contribution of the provincial staffs, as was done for Scottish weekly staffs.

The position in Northern Ireland also improved early in 1943. Serious efforts by members there to strengthen Union organisation were invigorated by a visit of the National Organiser (L. A. Berry) to Belfast and Londonderry. The membership, long stagnant at 13, rose to 60 in February, including 36 nominations in Belfast and nine in Londonderry, which is now a separate branch. Chapels were formed in the offices of the *Belfast Telegraph* and *Northern Whig*. The Branch was striving for recognition of the Newspaper Society's wage agreements in Northern Ireland. The local P. & K.T.F. and the N.E.C. pledged full support.

CHAPTER XX.

STORIES OF BIGGEST BRANCHES.

THERE are 119 branches and a few sub-branches in the Union to-day. Each has its own story: some would justify a pamphlet and a few even a book. They are builders in greater or less degree of the proud structure of the Union, but a history concerned with the corporate acts and policies of the whole body must leave the great mass of loyal service thus rendered " unhonoured and unsung," in the sense of any detailed mention. That does not imply any want of gratitude to the multitude of workers who have contributed something of value to the common stock. Personal memories of the days of small things, of early exploits and of unforgettable comradeships, would forbid it. Some outstanding branch records, however, demand a place and a compromise must be found. Size and special character dictate the selection—Fleet Street, with its satellites of suburbia, and its trade, technical and periodical enclave; and

Manchester, with its historic priority and trade union tradition. First, then, Manchester, acclaimed as "the mother of the Union," which having set its sturdy youngster on its feet, had to surrender its primacy to the big battalions of London and to accept the removal of headquarters from North to South. These big changes were made in the most friendly manner, though the Lancashire lads still pride themselves on the retention of the "real Manchester spirit." Tom Crimes, called by his colleagues "the paragon of all secretaries," who has been secretary of the branch for 23 years, has written its story with a modesty natural to an officer who is as unassuming as he is efficient. Here is his narrative:

Geographically the Manchester branch is not its former self. At one time Bolton, Bury, Buxton, Rochdale, Stockport, Macclesfield, and Wigan came within its "parish." To-day, with few exceptions, all the members of the branch could walk to the centre of the city from their offices in less than twenty minutes. Former Bury, Bolton, and Wigan members are now in the Bolton branch, Rochdale in Oldham and Rochdale, and Stockport, Macclesfield, and Buxton members in the Stockport branch. Manchester has always taken the line that if members in outlying districts desire to set up house for themselves they can rely on the support and encouragement of the present branch. In one instance it readily gave a grant towards the cost of furnishings. The new branches have firmly established themselves, proving, if proof were needed, that from the general point of view Manchester's policy in this matter has been the right one. But though Manchester has lost girth it has lost little weight represented by membership. Transfers from other branches and new members have helped to maintain its membership at a high level; and had the "hivings-off" to Bolton, Oldham, and Stockport not taken place it is probable that Menchester would be to-day, as it once was, the second largest branch in the Union.

The N.U.J. is a trade union and nowhere is trade unionism more strongly upheld than in Manchester. On this subject the branch has decided opinions, which it has inherited from its founders in 1907. Among them were James Haslam, H. M. Richardson, R. C. Spencer and W. N. Watts, all of whom rose to "high estate" in the Union. They set the branch's feet firmly on the trade union highway, and in this they were assisted by others who are still associated with the branch in one category of membership or another. They include W. H. Armitt, W. A. Balmforth, T. Crimes, F. Haworth, H. C. Lomax, T. Longworth, C. A. Smith, and W. Wood. Tom Crimes continues to act as branch secretary, a position to which he was first elected in 1920, and W. H. Holliday is on the verge of completing fifty years of journalism. C. E. Turner (trustee), who joined the Union at Birmingham in 1908, has been with the Manchester branch since 1913. H. D. Nichols (past president) became a member of the Union through the Manchester branch in 1911. C. J. Bundock (general secretary) has also been a member. Family associations with the branch have been maintained in several instances. Holliday has a son a member and so has Haworth. The son of James Haslam is a member and so is the son of Percy Rudd, who was treasurer in 1907. Then Miss Crossley, one of the most active among women members, is the daughter of the late L. G. Crossley, who joined in 1907, and was chairman in 1928.

Evidence that the branch has kept faith with its founders in respect of trade unionism is forthcoming at practically every meeting, either on local initiative or in support of a lead given by the N.E.C. Members were lost when the branch stood by N.E.C. policy in the 1926 strike, but the majority of them were recovered. It was largely through Man-

chester branch action that the North-Western Council was formed in 1919, and it was Manchester which took the first move towards having the accounts of the Union transferred to the only democratically-owned bank in this country, the C.W.S., which, as one member afterwards put it, " not only minds our money in perfect safety but gives us something for being allowed to do it." No other branch can have done more than Manchester for the closed shop movement. The *Daily Herald* brought the closed shop with it when it came to Manchester in 1930. Withy Grove was successful in establishing it in 1938. Other offices were not long in following suit, with the result that to-day it would be difficult for anyone to find a place on the staff of any newspaper published in Manchester unless he is a member of the Union or is in process of becoming one. Withy Grove was also the first office to get a minimum wage of £7 established. This figure is now recognised as the unofficial minimum for daily and weekly newspapers published in Manchester. At the beginning of 1933 the branch decided to affiliate to the Manchester and Salford Trades Council and affiliation has continued from that day to this.

Manchester gave a national lead when the Judicial Proceedings (Regulation of Reports) Bill was before the country. The branch prepared a pamphlet giving reasons why, in its opinion, the Bill was both unnecessary and undesirable and indicating the added responsibilities of working journalists in the pursuit of their calling. The pamphlet had a wide circulation among members of Parliament and N.U.J. District Councils and branches. " A gratifying feature of the campaign," the Branch stated in its 1925 annual report, " was the changed attitude adopted by headquarters. At the outset the efforts of the branch appeared to be regarded as unnecessary, but later they were cordially approved and the branch encouraged to go on with its propaganda. The pamphlet as revised was taken over by headquarters for national circulation and the N.E.C. undertook to bear all the expenses incurred by the branch in this propaganda." Manchester was in the forefront of, if it did not actually pioneer, the opposition to the mis-use of the Official Secrets Acts. In 1938 it set up a committee to consider suggestions that might be put before the N.E.C. for getting amendments. The branch felt itself particularly affected, not only because one of its own members (E. D. G. Lewis) had been fined for refusing to divulge the source of information, but because the Press of the Provinces had been more alive to the dangers of the Act than had the National Press. Proposals put forward by the committee were drawn up on the basis that the Press as a whole should work for the amending of the Acts with a solid popular backing. " It is unlikely," the committee stated, " that the Union alone can induce or compel the Government to alter the Act ; the particular honour that will come to the Union will be if it takes the lead." It is now a matter of history that the campaign was taken up by the nation and succeeded in its main objects. In 1938 the branch gave another lead by deciding to levy full members 1/- and probationers 6d. and to give half to the Widow and Orphan Fund and half to the Special Unemployment Fund.

There was always a spirit of rivalry between London and Manchester, but mostly healthy and very rarely unworthy. It was governed by the good humour which in most journalists is strengthened by their wide and constant contacts with men and affairs. But the spirit was none the less a reality, and found expression in genial banter or sturdy contention. Away back in 1916 Fleet Street, having survived the good natured onslaught of visiting American journalists who told us how newspapers ought to be run, faced a Manchester invasion. The writer of a current note said that London men were too modest to believe that they

could teach the Northerners anything in the way of taste and accuracy, but he predicted an interesting and stern struggle. "We shall resort," he commented, "to no drastic measures to defend ourselves against the Manchester men; on the contrary, we shall do our best to make as good Londoners of them as is possible with the material." Years before that, when trade unionism was an alien import in Fleet Street, the "Manchester school" seemed to some of us like the monitor of the northern mists, keeping a stern watch on the escapades of the gay cavaliers of the South. Even Watts, with all his human breadth, was tempted this way in moments of strain. Writing in 1917, after an arduous day of executive meetings in Manchester, Martin confessed that he was "not pleased with the way Watts opposed everything that had the slightest taint of London about it. But Watts apologised afterwards for letting himself go as he did." This was, of course, only a momentary phase: Watts was too big a man for small jealousies; besides this, he doubtless had some grounds for his fears. Not long after that, when we had proved our mettle by winning agreements in London, James Haslam, a real Lancashire man who could be as gruff as anybody on occasions, sent me a note as President: "I want to congratulate the London members of the Executive on the results of the negotiations with the N.P.A. You have not obtained all you applied for, but what has been offered will I think be an encouragement to the Union in all parts of the country. A minimum of £8 8s. 0d. will help our case in the Provinces. I am grateful."

London was qualifying for the Union leadership, and was giving the best answer to what criticisms had been made. Well aware of the feeling, on my election as Vice-President at the 1917 A.D.M. I expressed gratification at Manchester's support of the nomination of a London man, in whom any idea of rivalry between one area of the Union and another had long since yielded to the one aim of uniting all forces in support of the beneficent objects to which the Union was dedicated. These sentiments, however, did not banish belligerency. In fact this because so assertive at one period that some Union men in Fleet Street gave fleeting thought to the formation of a separate Union. When the removal of headquarters to London was discussed at the 1919 A.D.M., W. E. Pegg was met with loud cries of "No" (from the Northern delegates) as he pictured how the direction of Union affairs had been carried on in London by the nucleus of Executive membership there. Opposition grew more vociferous when he declared that the

Manchester office had become merely the working place of the salaried staff. In a note which came after the A.D.M., Richardson said: "I think I'm going to write to Pegg to ask him what the deuce he meant by insisting that all the work was done in London." Of course Pegg had not said that at all, but it showed how touchy the General Secretary was on this point.

After the 1921 A.D.M. Walter Betts, the leader of the Central London delegation, complained of "antagonism" of other branches. London was then claiming greater representation on the Executive. It had only one territorial member, though its membership was more than a third of the Union total. The remaining two-thirds had fourteen territorial members of the N.E.C. History was called up to show that London was actuated by the desire to promote the general good of the Union and not by selfish aims. I can flatly claim, with my hand on my heart, that many Fleet Street men who were active in the Union were genuinely concerned for the uplift of their poorer comrades in the provinces, more than for their own immediate interests. This was certainly true in the pioneering period. The critics of London had a field day at the 1920 A.D.M. There was heresy within the pale, for Veitch, of the Parliamentary Branch, expressed the fear that Central London was becoming the dominating influence in the Union. Doubtless, with his Scots' logic, he would have said that he spoke as a general officer of the Union. Then came a joke from Tom Jay: "Would I be in order in suggesting that the Union affiliates to the Central London Branch?" The burlesque reached its peak when H. D. Nichols wanted to move that, in the event of the Central London Branch membership increasing to more than half the Union, the N.E.C. be authorised to save expense of an A.D.M. by empowering an ordinary meeting of that branch to legislate for the Union; the Branch being requested, if not inconvenient, to send to other branches a copy of any new rule it might impose on them. The President (Haslam) was in no humour to stage the play and declined to accept the motion.

It was in the memorable year, 1912, that Central London passed Manchester in the membership race, the respective totals in December being 480 and 360. A comparison with the present totals is a gauge of progress. At the end of 1942 Manchester had 533 members, Central London 1,833. The London area includes the suburban, the Parliamentary, and the Trade and Periodical Branches, and the grand total was 2,835, considerably more than one third of the membership of the whole Union,

which was 7,432. Manchester's swan song appeared in the *Journal* in October 1912. "After enjoying so long the honour of being the strongest branch in the Union numerically we relinquish the proud position to the Central London Branch, whose growth we have watched with something like envy, knowing full well that whereas we are practically at the end of our tether, they can go on adding to their membership almost indefinitely." It will be realised by the thoughtful reader that the task of building up these big branches in London from nothing has been Herculean. To tell that story as it should be told is impossible in my present limits. Perhaps somebody who has lived right through it will one day produce the book that it deserves, for nothing less would be adequate. All I can do is to give a few swift glances. First the difficulty of getting men to join a new, and rather dubious, organisation. Then the gathering of the clans at the A.D.M. at Anderton's Hotel in 1909, and the dinner, with G. K. Chesterton, Spencer Leigh Hughes, A. G. Gardiner, and other stars in the Fleet Street galaxy at the top table, which gave us a certificate of respectability. But prejudice took a lot of living down. Some Union members themselves were weak kneed. J. E. Brown told me as late as 1917 of the secretary of a Union branch in the South who got a job as sub-editor on the P.A., and specially asked that it should not be made known in Fleet-street that he was a Union member, although assured that he would find quite a number of members at the P.A. when he got there. Yet only three years later we were to win the Agency Staffs' Charter.

Provincial journalists, moreover, were vitally concerned in our movement in London. Evidence of this is contained in a rather startling document which I have seen. It was issued by the Ministry of Labour Employment Department, Cardiff, on January 30, 1918. The recipients of it were asked whether they would be willing to accept the post of London and Gallery correspondent to the *Western Mail* during the war at £4 10s. per week, the qualifications necessary being as follows:

Wide and accurate knowledge of political questions and Parliamentary procedure; also of political, commercial, industrial, educational and social questions in which Wales is specially interested. It has been found necessary that a London Correspondent of the *Western Mail* should have journalistic experience in Wales, as so much of our London work is dependent on an intimate knowledge of Wales and its special activities. Must be a fully-trained journalist and a good and quick writer, and a man of good address, as his duties bring him in close and almost daily contact with Cabinet Ministers, high Government officials and other provincial and leading men. Must be in first-class health, as the duties are heavy and entail long hours. No hours can be fixed for this appointment, as a London Correspondent is practically on duty or "on call" day and night.

The post of London reporter on the same paper was also offered, at £3 per week. The qualifications were very largely the same as those defined above. The reporter "must be a man of good address, a verbatim shorthand writer, rapid transcriber, a good writer of correct English, and must possess a knowledge of Welsh, as on occasion Welsh speeches are delivered and Welsh papers are read in London." No hours could be fixed. He had to be on duty to receive instructions by first post, and also to attend to late deliveries by post or by hand. This applied to all seven days a week. The cost of living had nearly doubled during the war and the reporter's £3 would be worth about 30s., at pre-war valuation. Here obviously was something calling for fight. In 1920 the Union got a minimum of eight guineas for the Gallery men and £7 17s. 6d. for the reporters; while as a matter of fact at the present time men with the qualifications stated can command salaries in London ranging from £500 to £1,500 a year.

There were cases on the London papers and agencies themselves on a par with this Cardiff example, and the knowledge of all this gave zest and grit to the Union's campaign in Fleet Street. All the work fell to voluntary workers. Committee meetings weekly to keep pace with the growing work, a treasurer struggling to get in contributions and banish the bogey of arrears, which was raised by our critics at many an A.D.M.; a secretary worried by the apathy of the rank and file, and miserably small attendances at branch meetings. It was a long and exhausting pull before success brought a reward. As the branch grew bigger an office was taken up a rickety flight of stairs in the building of the *Poultry World*, on the north side of Fleet Street facing Bouverie Street. There was a good deal of cackling amid the litter of the roost, and many schemes were hatched. Later there was a better office, and secretary and treasurer had to be furnished with clerical assistance to keep the work going efficiently. Now the Branch is housed in Bouverie House, Benn's big building in the Street.

The mention of arrears, in grappling with which I for long had a chief share, reminds me of one impeccable member, no less than a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Philip Snowden was never in arrear. As treasurer I used to receive a neat little note from 11, Downing Street, enclosing the contribution before the date due. Canonbury, when he was on the *Daily Chronicle*, would on the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, say to Foster: "Tom, another year, Union sub. now due," and hand over a

cheque. A turning point in the financial position of the Branch was the adoption of the office-collector system, an idea for which the Branch was indebted to Cardiff. The stiff part of this innovation was finding the collectors. When they did get to work these collectors proved to be invaluable. A record mentioned in the report for 1927 is worthy of recall. H. Carr, of the P.A., and F. A. Mansfield, of the *Daily News*, each collected from a staff of between 60 and 70. The former had an absolutely clean sheet at the end of the year, and the latter was only a few shillings behind. My first experience of the Branch was in 1910. The officers then were: J. T. Smith (*Daily News*) chairman; E. L. Goodman (*Daily Telegraph*) hon. treasurer; P. E. Canning Baily, hon. financial secretary; Horace Sanders, hon. secretary; Committee, A. C. Davies, T. Foster (*Daily Chronicle*), E. Smith (*Morning Leader*); F. Macpherson (*Daily Mail*), T. H. Hatfield (*Yorkshire Post*), F. Keighley (*Evening Times*), E. Chattaway (*Star*), F. J. Mansfield (*Standard*), J. A. Baker (*Daily Telegraph*), J. H. Harley, E. A. Davies (London News Agency), and J. O'Donovan (*Daily News*). Among the personnel before that year may be mentioned J. Heighton, secretary in 1907, H. Prosser Chanter, an early secretary and enthusiastic pioneer, who was followed by C. F. Tuckett, who came from Sheffield. Among the first band of members were also David Berry, Hayes and Ponting, of Croydon. Heighton was, I believe, the first London man on the Executive, and he gave place to E. B. d'Auvergne. It would be vain and invidious to pick out names for mention in the subsequent history of the Branch, except for actual office-bearers. Among those who presided over the Branch, whom I can remember, are E. L. Goodman, Josiah Oddy, Hugh Redwood, Horace Thorogood, T. Foster, Edith Shackleton Heald, G. Bateman, Walter Betts, J. Hayward, Crossley Davies, (Miss) M. T. Hogg and F. P. Dickinson. The great band of those who have been honorary officials yields the names of J. O'Donovan, David Berry, C. Gabbertas, G. G. Miller, H. E. Dixey, D. Christian, P. H. Benson, C. P. Robertson, Nelson Leaver, myself as chairman and treasurer, succeeded by W. Betts, and many others. At one time the work was so heavy that the secretarial duties were sectionalised, and there were general nomination, minutes, insurance and entertainment secretaries—quite a little committee in themselves. Two names to be added are F. P. Dickinson, secretary since 1923 and W. J. King, treasurer since 1928, both happily still in office and functioning at Bouverie House.

A high place in the branch roll of honour must be allotted to Dickinson, who has a fine record of practical journalism and of Union service. A Sheffield lad of sporting proclivities he played football for the Wednesday when it was an amateur team, and had equal distinction in the cricketing field. He did 25 years' service on the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, for ten years as chief sub-editor. The year 1911 found him a sub-editor on the London service of the Press Association with which he remained until pension age. But Union work kept on, and he continues the loyal and untiring services which have been of so great value to the premier Branch. A fitting recognition came in 1937 when he was elected President of the Union. He has long been a steady worker on the N.E.C. On completion of his 20 years' secretaryship in February, 1943, Ernest Jay (chairman of Central London Branch) paid him a handsome tribute. More and more Dickinson, he said, had shown himself an indispensable pillar of the Branch. His interest in every member was that of a benevolent father " and he is the safe depositary of more confidences than any man I know." For many years, under the pseudonym of " Autolycus," Dickinson has contributed a page of " Echoes from Fleet Street " to the *Journalist*. There could not be a more regular and reliable correspondent but he has often found that the job brings more kicks than ha'pence.

Horace Thorogood, ever a keen observer and a shrewd critic, sends me a miniature sketch of bygone days in the Branch.

It was a very pleasant personal association that placed me, in what was a pioneering job of work, beside you, Tom Foster, John Dunbar, Horace Sanders and W. Betts, the colleagues whose names come particularly to mind. You had more sound common sense than any of us. Tom was the prophet of the movement, the tireless negotiator, the bearder of Fleet Street lions in their proprietorial dens, so heart and soul in it that I used to wonder how he managed to get time for his paid job on the *Chronicle*. I would see him often come into the Club very late at night, having spent his day talking, writing and working for the Union and his night ostensibly sub-editing for his paper, but really, I was convinced, writing articles for the Union underneath the blotting paper, looking as if just emerged from a fight against fearful odds, but still rosy and good-humoured. He could talk about the Union just as long as one could listen, indeed much longer—an encyclopoedia of facts about his darling subject. Occasionally his talk would be interrupted by long quotations from Carlyle, who certainly wouldn't have been a member of the Union if he had had the chance. Dunbar, gazing through thick glasses, pale and earnest, had the cold-steel Scottish mind, treated the Union like an engineering job, was master of its screws and nuts and bolts and rivets—a born organiser and manager, the sort of man we had special need of. He gingered me to collect the messages from prominent persons (Shaw, Kipling, Wells and many others) which adorned the programme of a N.U.J. benevolent effort at the Ambassadors' theatre, lent by Mr. Charles Cochrane. Horace Sanders was the volatile enthusiast, practising upon us that fluent and rotund oratory which was later to be the pride and joke

of the Press Club; doing us a lot of good by the sheer effulgence of his popularity.

The members over whom we (in my committee days) presided were an elusive lot. Few were ever seen at the monthly meetings: those who were, were usually the same as last time, and included invariably two or three whom I, at any rate, would wish away. They were the "Reds" for ever urging us to order a general strike, send messages of fraternity to Russia, come out in sympathy with the dustmen of Ashby de la Zouche, or call out the staff of some newspaper where a member (probably in arrears) had been (very likely quite rightly) fired. They had an evil genius for proposing amendments in long-winded speeches sputtering with class hatred. One in particular I remember (now a thoroughly tamed member of the staff of a most respectable newspaper) for whom, when from the chair I would see his bland dissenting-ministerial face rise to a point of order, I would feel a horrible hatred. Lovers, they were, of the sound of their own voices.

The old Bohemianiam was already fading when the Union came to Fleet Street, and the vivid types pictured, sometimes fancifully by Gibbs in "The Street of Adventure," excited the scorn of the genuine *bon vivant* of the Sala era. But there was enough left in the early 1900's to make its mark on some of the trade union innovators. It could be seen in the happy-go-lucky methods with which serious business was sometimes transacted. Some impressions are indelible. Once a branch meeting solemnly passed standing orders to control its somewhat irregular habits. Nothing more was heard of them and when thirty years later there was again talk of the need of such discipline the former orders were asked for but could not be found. It was a grim business keeping finances in order. One often saw Horace Sanders, when he was both secretary and treasurer, flitting about the street and its environs with cheques and postal orders bulging in, and sometimes protruding from, his pockets. Some had been collected en route from casual payers. When I reminded him of this recently he confessed that the experiences of those days had had a lasting effect on his sartorial system. Members stopped him in the street, the Club, some hostelry, at the music hall and the railway station, in fact anywhere, and gave him their "subs." If not taken on the spot the money might have been lost to the Union, so the ubiquitous treasurer stuffed his pockets, till somebody told him he ought to have a poacher's pocket. As he happened to be getting a new suit he got his tailor to put one in with a button for security. The day's takings would be thrust into that capacious pocket. Even to-day Sanders's suits still have that poacher's pocket.

There was a very good reason why Union cash, orders and cheques were carried about, sometimes for days, in that way. The Branch had no office. Sanders had a tiny locker in the cellars of

the Press Club, then in Wine Office Court, and he used a writing table in the Goldsmith lounge for correspondence. He even had to carry branch noteheadings in his pocket for official letters. Then Mr. Frank Colebrook (the printers' valuer formerly a journalist and always a friend to the Union) allowed him to use a chair and a table in his place in Wine Office Court, and this was the secretarial office. There was a fire at the Press Club, but Sanders had removed his tackle. The Treasurer, however, kept his books in a Club locker and these perished in the flames. Before then Sanders and colleagues used to meet in the Club to check the day's or the week's haul and make up an account, necessary for the deduction of the branch management proportion in remitting contributions to Manchester. The strain of all this had been too much for Sanders and he insisted on the appointment of a treasurer. Canning-Baily took the post.

A " peaceful picketing " incident at King's Cross was a novel piece of early branch work. It arose from the *York Herald* dispute. A young reporter had been persuaded to take a job in the banned office, and Manchester telegraphed details to the secretary asking him to watch a certain train for York, to try to trace the incipient blackleg and persuade him not to go. The task clearly called for circumspection, but it was tackled. Seeing a young fellow apparently guarded by an older man, Sanders said to the former: " The *Yorkshire Herald*, I believe," and as the quarry was startled he stolidly told him the story of the Union struggle. The older man complained to the guard, had the carriage door locked and pulled up the window. Raising his voice Sanders called " Don't go, stay behind and help your brother journalists to get better conditions." He kept at it till the whistle blew, and a porter, who had been an interested listener and was doubtless a good trade unionist, exclaimed " Drarn him with good advice, guvnor." The young man, like many another, stayed only a few days at York.

Head Office had a habit of asking Central London at short notice to send speakers to Union gatherings, often far afield. One such occasion was a dinner at Birmingham on April 13, 1911, of which I have the menu card. On the back is a cartoon by Tom Webster showing T. P. O'Connor, the chief guest, sitting at a desk, and a waiter bringing in a meal with a cover inscribed " N.U.J." Lethem replied to the toast of the Union, proposed by Tay Pay; J. V. Morton spoke for the guests; W. N. Watts and Percy Rudd for the founders; and E. L. Goodman and H. Sanders (Central

London) for the branches. Social functions were more frequent in the early history of the branch than in later years. "Jimmy" Haworth, a little man always smoking a huge pipe, was entertainment secretary and he and Sanders were first rate team leaders for those occasions. At one of the many concerts given at Anderton's Hotel, now a gap in the Street, artists who had promised to help were very late. For fully thirty minutes the unfortunate Sanders kept the show going with imitations, spoof speeches and tearful monologues. The puzzled audience stood it well, but just as the *locum* had struck a vein which was appreciated Haworth rushed on the stage and said: "You can stop now, old man, we have got the real artists at last," or words to that effect. One of Marie Lloyd's last public appearances was at a smoker held at the Salisbury Hotel in January, 1913, to make a presentation to Sanders when he left for Paris to join the *New York Herald*. One more little story about Sanders which he tells against himself. At one of those charity matinees, on which Foster spent so much organising genius, King Manoel was a visitor. Foster directed that Sanders should receive him. During the performance Sanders was summoned to the Royal box and asked to explain from time to time what the audience was laughing at. It was a big order and in despair Sanders told some jokes of his own. With a happy smile Manoel said: "You know you are not so funny as he (the comedian on the stage) is. Now tell me all about your great profession!"

Ardent and soulful pioneers are sometimes heard to bewail shortcomings of the human material with which they have to fashion their crusades. It is a disconcerting reflection for the optimist when he surveys the slow process of human evolution, and it is no less a vexation of trade union leaders in their efforts to consolidate workers of all ranks. That hundred per cent. membership, and that unity of action so desired is difficult of attainment. Perhaps the struggle for it has been more toilsome in journalism than in other occupations, and within the newspaper world some areas have been more difficult than others. Fleet Street, I am certain, has been harder to organise than Manchester. Hence, in spite of all the progress, the bitter complaint of the discouraged branch officer. One has heard a mordant critic of his own branch declare that Central London was composed of flaming, zealous youth, a mass of rank indifference, plenty of snappy, politically-minded partisans, and a small core of constructive thinkers and steady workers. There

is truth in this, but it is not the whole truth. The work accomplished, and the prestige and numerical strength of the Union in London to-day, speak for themselves.

One or two phases of useful work remain for brief recital. In 1911-12 a resolute effort was made to secure the adoption in London of a police press pass system similar to those existing in the Continental capitals. It took six months to accumulate the requisite data. The correspondence had to be conducted in French and in this the help of Ernest Smith, the old-time war correspondent famed for an exploit in the siege of Ladysmith, was valuable. The outcome was a heavy dossier of replies from the Chiefs of Police in nine European capitals and New York, of which I have a copy. It is, of course, only a piece of ancient history, but is evidence of earnest and painstaking work in early days. A Union deputation which included E. Chattaway (later editor of the *Star*) and another *Star* man, R. S. Pengelly, who lives in our memories as a brilliant journalist and a loyal comrade, was received by Sir Edward Henry, Commissioner at New Scotland Yard, who showed practical interest in what was then a novel proposal for London. During the interview the Commissioner made a remark critical of journalists and Sanders launched an effervescent reply. Chattaway and "Pen" had to pull him down and apologise to the Commissioner for his "youthful exuberance." A listener of almost Oriental impassiveness the Police Chief simply said: "Let him go on, I like it." On the suggestion of the Commissioner, who wanted a scheme generally agreed, the Union asked the Institute of Journalists to co-operate and they appointed Messrs. Spenser Sarle, F. H. Farthing and George Springfield to act with E. L. Goodman, Josiah Oddy and H. Sanders for the Union. It was not a successful effort in co-operation, and the thing fell through, with the result that press passes, apparently so near then, did not come for years.

A field in which the branch has been able to play a useful part has been the making of contacts with men of the British Commonwealth and of foreign countries. Such visitors naturally find their way first to London, and in so far as newspaper people are concerned Central London Branch has had many opportunities of friendly and fruitful contact. Americans are first-rate mixers, and the N.U.J. head office in Fleet Street often gave them a welcome. Dean Walter Williams, founder of the School of Journalism in the University of Missouri (claimed to be the first

such school in the world) became a member of Central London branch. Another well-known American investigator of English conditions, was Eric W. Allen, Dean of the School of Journalism, University of Oregon. One day he pulled up at the front door of my house in the village of Sompting in the motor with which he had travelled from Oregon to New York, across the Atlantic, and toured Europe and Great Britain. We had a first-rate parley, on journalistic education in this country and the United States. Yet another visitor was John W. Cunliffe, director of the Columbia School of Journalism, founded on Joseph Pulitzer's benefaction. During the Great War a welcome "contact" was Capt. Niesigh, who was on a tour of organisation for a projected World's Press Congress at Sydney, Australia. He wanted the N.U.J. to send a delegation and I well remember how Alf. Martin, who was then President, toyed with the idea that I should accompany him on a very attractive visit to the Antipodes. Owing to the War the scheme had to be dropped. An informal lunch at the Press Club (then not long settled in its new quarters in St. Bride House under the shadow of the famous Wren steeple) was attended by Niesigh and a few of us who were interested in the Congress idea. It is firmly "dated" in my mind, because while we were smoking after lunch the Balfour *communiqué* on the Battle of Jutland came in and spread a gloom which was not dissipated till later and better news was issued.

One other matter on which much could, but must not, be written, is the unwieldy size of the branch and the difficulty of its efficient organisation and conduct. The tiny meetings of such a huge branch have always been a reproach. A problem was to find the time that would suit the majority, and the rival claims of the night and day workers. Another was the collection of contributions. Staff men in the big offices were covered by collectors, but there were many free lances, and the trade and periodical members isolated in units or small groups all over the City. Some relief was found in centrifugal action. If it be not too gorgeous a simile the central sun threw off its planets and gave them their own orbits. First the Parliamentary Branch, then the Trade and Periodical, and also the photographers. And now a commission set up by the A.D.M. is inquiring into the whole question of Union organisation in London.

The organisation of London, holding the biggest aggregation of working journalists in the world, was without doubt a weighty responsibility. Leaders in the Central London

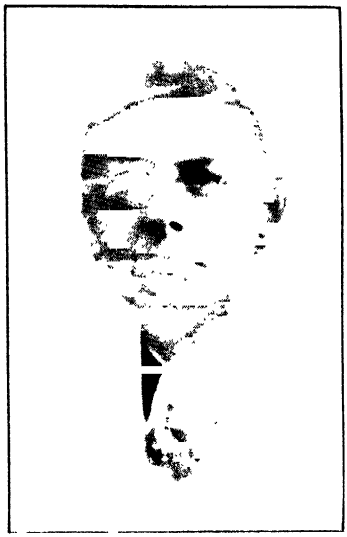
Branch did their best in the first few years to meet it. Then as they made way in the ranks of workers on the ordinary newspapers, they felt able to give attention to the staffs engaged in other sections of the wide field of the Press. In point of numbers the chief of these was the " trade and periodical " Press, comprising a great variety of publications issued by the big magazine houses, and many trade, technical and scientific papers. Here was obviously a vast area for Union expansion and increasing attention was devoted to it by the branch after the Great War. The interests of these classes of journalists were first provided for by creating special sections of branch machinery. Then in 1924 one representative each was placed on the committee for periodicals and for the trade and technical papers. T. S. Mercer was one of these and he worked so successfully in getting new members, and making the trade and periodical men a considerable minority in the branch, that there was soon talk of forming them into a sub-branch. With the help of W. Betts and the support of Head Office the sub-branch came into existence in 1924, with Arthur Fish, of Cassell's, as chairman and B. H. Tripp, of Benn Brothers, as secretary. B. A. Cooper, of the *Draper's Record*, became the treasurer, and later when a seat on the N.E.C. was granted to this section he was chosen for it. It was a novel unit of Union organisation, as a branch with the basis of class, and not geographical, distinction. The inferior status of a sub-branch did not long satisfy the aspirations of a growing membership and at the end of 1924 the apron strings of Central London were cut, to the satisfaction of both parent and child, and the Trade and Periodical Branch came into being.

Soon afterwards the branch affiliated to the London P. and K.T.F.; it had consistently taken a militant trade union line. Affiliation to the T.U.C. was its hardy annual at A.D.M.'s. It has also shown a partiality for politics and been responsible for motions asking for the release of the Meerut prisoners, condemning Fascism as far back as 1935, supporting the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Ossietsky, criticising racial discrimination against Polish journalists, etc. Moreover these were carried, showing the debating strength of the teams sent to the A.D.M. The sub-branch started off with a membership of 120, and this grew to about 250 in 1931. The fight for the 300 was hard. It must be noted that the Union had got no wage agreement with the owners for these workers, only a recommended scale as recorded elsewhere. When the Branch complained of this the

Executive reply was "First you must organise," yet the barrier of unsettled conditions stood against the winning of new members. The advice of the Executive was felt to be sound, and the Branch's way of endorsing it was by demanding the appointment of a Trade and Periodical Organiser. At the Torquay A.D.M. (1937) a motion recognising the enormous potentialities for recruitment in this section of journalism, and sanctioning the appointment of a special organiser as a profitable experiment, was carried.

L. A. Berry, who had been secretary and chairman of the Branch, and succeeded Cooper as the representative on the Executive, received the appointment, and by the end of 1937, 96 new members had been added to the branch, mostly from the large periodical houses such as Odhams, Amalgamated Press and Newnes. Berry had been 11 years in the Amalgamated Press, where he had got a Union chapel formed. He did not complete a year of experiment, being appointed National Organiser in succession to C. J. Bundock, when the latter became General Secretary after the death of H. M. Richardson. The chairman of the Branch, P. Fullerton-Bustard, was chosen as T. & P. Organiser. He had graduated in weekly journalism and been editor of a trade paper. The A.D.M. had decided in favour of continuing the appointment in view of the 40 per cent. increase in membership during the half year in which the temporary organiser had been in office. The 1940 A.D.M. adopted the N.E.C. recommendation to continue the post, after considering the facts and figures of membership, of finance, and of general Union policy in relation to the organising of trade and periodical journalists. It was stated that there were still, at a conservative estimate, framed by the Organiser, 960 journalists in this special field outside the Union, and, besides recruiting, the new officer had important functions in maintaining and strengthening Union organisation.

A much stronger exposition of the need was given in the *Journalist* of October, 1938, by Patrick Campbell, an active member of the branch. His points may be summarised thus: Of the 7,000 members of the Union most were newspaper men, but there were in the country about 2,400 separate magazines and periodicals which must at the lowest represent a total journalistic staff of about 5,000, of whom fewer than 500 were in the branch. What was the use, he asked, of talking about a "real and effective trade union" when 4,500 journalists were outside the fold? The task of approaching and organising these



J. C. MENZIES
General Treasurer 1907-12.



WILLIAM VEITCH
General Treasurer 1910-23.



L. A. BERRY
National Organiser



P. FULLERTON-BUSTARD
I. & P. Organiser





in some 2,500 offices was perhaps the Union's hardest problem at the time. The difficulties he pictured as these—offices where one or two individual journalists comprise the whole staff; offices where a chapel can never be formed because there will never be enough journalists to form one; offices to which it is impossible to gain access; potential members whose names are unknown to any member of a branch; potential members whose homes are scattered over 13 or more counties (as was actually the case with the existing members of the Branch); "women journalists who treat their salaries as pin money and look down their noses at a trade union"; and finally the lack of any salary agreement of any kind with the proprietors. Campbell gave this as his personal view only but it was a valuable presentation of a perplexing problem, though his startling figures have to be received with some caution. The official estimate of 1940 quoted above and giving a much smaller figure of the extent of the unorganised constituency, is doubtless nearer the truth, but this total is sufficiently impressive. The description of the exceptional difficulty of reaching the outsiders will appeal to those who know the facts.

If these are the normal obstacles to progress it may be readily imagined what a task falls to the Organiser in war time. Fullerton-Bustard fortunately had intimate knowledge of this special field of work, and his enterprise and skill in negotiation has enabled him, in conjunction with the General Secretary, to secure valuable agreements. In 1939, negotiations with Odhams Press, now a leading periodical publishing house, secured the first trade and periodical agreement south of Manchester, where an agreement had been concluded with the Cooperative Wholesale Society in the previous year. Manchester took a leading part in dealing with the C.W.S., and was duly decorated (verbally) with "battle honours" at the ensuing A.D.M. The Odhams agreement provided for a graded minimum rising to six guineas weekly when the journalist had completed five years in journalism; it also stipulated union membership as a condition of employment. There is an important and expanding book publishing department at Odhams, and the members working in it were not specifically included in the periodical agreement. This omission was rectified by the conclusion of a separate agreement for the department, in almost identical terms, in 1941. In these negotiations the Union met Mr. John Dunbar, the editorial director of Odhams. Years before as a young member of the Union he helped to gain

the "recommendation" on salary scales. Now, by one of the strange reversals of life, he acted for the owners; but "Heaven from all creatures hides the Book of Fate." It was a happy turn for the Union, for Mr. Dunbar was still a staunch friend. Writing to the Union he said: "Although there is no agreement we have kept in mind the recommendations made some years ago by the Periodical Proprietors' Association, and have endeavoured to live up to them." He was one of a few who, keen members of the Union in their early careers, when they reached executive positions, still felt the power of original loyalties.

An agreement, securing a six guinea minimum after three years journalistic experience, and providing for a 40-hour week, was made in 1940 with Tribune Publications, Ltd., the publishers of the socialist weekly *Tribune*. A model agreement has just been made (1943) with the *Daily Film Renter*. This provides a 40-hour week; limitation of overtime to not more than eight hours a week, unless sanctioned by the Chapel, and payment for all overtime at the rate of time and a half, with a seven and a half guinea minimum at age 24. The story of how this minimum was obtained is picturesque and has a sporting flavour. Bustard, who was conducting negotiations for the Union, wanted an eight guinea minimum, but Mr. Ernest Fredman, proprietor of the paper, who sat on the opposite side of the table, was not prepared to concede a penny more than seven guineas. Bustard argued eloquently for a compromise of seven and a half. Mr. Fredman was adamant: "No," he said, "I am not giving way on that. You've got everything you want up to now—" "Except my eight guineas," retorted Bustard, "and now that I am willing to accept seven and a half, I think it would be a pity to———" "D—n it," was the retort, "I'll toss you for that seven and a half guineas. If you win, you'll get it." Bustard, who is an Irishman known to his many friends as Paddy, tells me in a note: "It was a dramatic moment. The wartime squander bug has its counterpart in the little devil gambler that haunts the heart of every Irishman. In the pause which followed the challenge, that little devil whispered and P.F.B. was lost. Speaking with assumed gravity I said: "Mr. Fredman, you are tempting me to gamble with men's livelihood. That is a thing I ought not to do, but —heads!" Mr. Fredman won the toss. The argument for a seven and a half guinea minimum was at an end. The negotiators shook hands and withdrew. That same afternoon Mr. Fredman did the sort of thing which has helped to make the standards of

British sportsmanship respected throughout the world. He wrote a letter saying that, although he had won the toss, he thought he ought not to take advantage of it, and he intended to pay the seven and a half guineas."

As things stand at the time of writing trade and periodical journalists form the main body of working journalists in Britain as yet without a collective agreement of any kind. This was due in part to the fact that the Trade Paper, Periodical and Weekly Newspaper Proprietors' Association had no power to negotiate on labour questions, and in part to doubts about the strength of union membership required in any particular house before an approach for a house agreement should be made. These doubts have only recently been settled. Despite the unity of interest between employer and employee which is supposed to be manifest in this country, there seems little chance of the employers' organisation expanding their articles of association to take in labour questions. It became more than ever important, therefore, that the question of the strength of membership necessary to permit steps to be taken to secure a house agreement should be answered without delay. Following the 1943 A.D.M., and in furtherance of an expressed desire to do something for this body of journalists, the General Secretary met the Trade and Periodical Branch, which is now the second largest in the Union. It was agreed at that meeting that a membership of 51 per cent., imbued with the right trade union spirit, should be the signal for advance. A sub-committee was at once formed, charged with the task of making plans to intensify the struggle for trade union recognition and conditions in a field, which, after the war, is likely to be a very important part of British journalism.

The development of the pictorial side of journalism presented another problem in Central London, as the area which contained the largest number of camera men and photographic printers. In 1914-18 war service and economies drew away a number of these men who had joined the Union, but they were among the first to show an awakened Union interest after the Armistice. In 1919 the N.P.A. agreed to give wage scales for camera men and dark room operatives, and in the following year the Proprietors Association of Press Photographic Agencies conceded a similar scale—rising to £8 8s. for photographers and to £5 5s. for printers. These moves helped to bring stability to the pictorial departments of London journalism. It was sadly

needed, for there had been scandalously low rates of pay, due to competition by new entrants and to undercutting by a few agencies. There were instances in Fleet Street of men getting less than £2 2s. a week, while the best free lances made more than £2 2s. a day. When first asked for a £5 5s. minimum the N.P.A. refused, but the 1921 agreement which still stands fixes the minimum for improvers at £4 4s., rising to £8 8s. after the seventh year. Provincial press photographers were assumed to be covered by the agreement with the Newspaper Society of March, 1921, but as this was challenged later a separate agreement was signed in July, 1934, recognising them as journalists for the purpose of the national rates already agreed. Controversy arose about the status of photographic printers and it was finally agreed that those who were members of the Union should be transferred to Natsopa. Fleet Street photographers in the early 'twenties began a movement for a branch of their own. In 1924 a sub-branch was formed, under the organising guidance of C. P. Robertson, with the help of C. J. Bundock the National Organiser. This soon blossomed into an independent branch and secured its own representative, Charlie Brown, on the N.E.C.

The photographers were a rather wayward and uncertain section of Union membership, despite the obvious need of solidarity. Perhaps this was traceable to the fact that they were a comparatively recent importation into journalism. The branch formed in 1925 was dissolved in 1932. It had ceased to function as a trade union branch. Ironically it was a new wages movement, and the controversy arising out of it, that brought this about. The membership of the branch was roughly divided into two sections—those employed by newspapers, with the advantage of the N.P.A. agreement, and the agency men, whose agreement had ceased to be observed. Negotiations were opened by the Union to get a new agreement, but after several meetings our representatives failed to obtain any offer higher than £7 7s. Knowing that most agency men were receiving a much lower figure the Union officials recommended acceptance of that rate as being better than no agreement, and a stepping stone to something better. Most of the agency men supported this view, but the newspaper staffs feared that their own rate of £8 8s. would be imperilled and opposed. At a large branch meeting Richardson and Foster failed by a small margin to get the Union suggestion carried. Interest in the branch continued to wane; a movement that might have led to revival, cohesion and better conditions

was obstructed, and the branch ceased to function. Its remaining members were transferred to the parent branch. Others are rejoining.

Suburban journalism has a story all its own; and I have been lucky enough to persuade a friend of mine who has had over forty years experience of it to write something of his memories. His record gives a graphic picture of the degrading conditions under which journalism was practised in the districts around London at the beginning of this century. Thanks to the Union there has been nothing less than a revolution. Compare with the miserable pittances mentioned the present scales. The lowest senior minimum for weeklies is now £5 3s. 6d. per week; and where dailies are published it is £5 10s. 0d. Years ago the Newspaper Society recommended rates higher than the provincial minimum for suburban papers. The writer has from the beginning been a valued Union worker, but he wishes to remain anonymous and if I said what I should like to say about him his identity might be guessed. The narrative which follows will convey to the young men who read these pages some conception of those almost forgotten bad old days:

In 1900, years before the birth of the N.U.J., there was very definitely a minimum wage for the young reporter who had just finished his five or seven years apprenticeship on a country paper. The wage was minimum because it was exactly the minimum on which he could exist. It was also the maximum because the supply of cheap labour was quite sufficient to make it unnecessary for employers to pay more. There was little difficulty in obtaining a job in those days for it was a period of mushroom newspapers in the newly developing Greater London. The young man of 19 and 20 on finishing his apprenticeship had the choice of several advertisements which he might answer in the *Daily News*. The rates of pay varied very little—21/- to 22/6 in the London suburban area and £1 a week in country towns. Taking into consideration the difference in the cost of lodgings, it meant much the same thing. No one thought of mentioning hours of employment; one naturally worked all the hours in which the Editor could find jobs to keep the staff occupied. And it was, of course, normally a seven day week. I recall a discussion with a fellow lodger who had the good fortune to be a comparatively well paid boot salesman. He regarded my job enviously and remarked: "You follow in the tradition of Dickens and Barrie, but I don't suppose you get much more than 30/- a week for a start." "One hears of these fabulous salaries, but how rarely one gets them," I replied, in the words of the third rate actor who had been told by a friend that he had secured a major part with a travelling company at £2 a week.

The weekly newspapers of East London where I had my first journalistic experience were mainly staffed by very young men. The senior reporters, with their 30/- a week, were usually in the early thirties. If they were over 40 they generally received rather less, for they were supposed to be past their zenith. My chief sub-editor fell into this category. He had had better jobs, had been on a provincial daily, but was now glad enough to accept anything he could get. One day, with the tactlessness of youth, I pointed out to him that he had made the curious mistake of putting on odd boots. He looked at me sadly as he answered: "I have not had a pair of boots for years, laddie. When one boot wears out I get another

from the sixpenny stall in Stratford Market." That man was a capable journalist, who taught me much, not least the fact that something was lacking in our profession. To-day, as a member of the Union, he would have received the N.U.J. minimum wage, and probably more, and could have bought a pair of boots.

When I arrived in London I was regarded as a very fortunate young man. I had stuck out for 22/6 a week and got it, whereas the other juniors in the office were receiving only a guinea. This so aroused the envy of another young reporter, that, greatly daring, he put in an application for an extra eighteen pence. Alas! his courage met with but poor reward. The supply of junior reporters was fairly brisk at that time and instead of a rise he received a week's notice. He was a good reporter, but the proprietor reasoned that, having set his heart on 22/6 a week, he might never again be content with 21/-. He was fortunate enough to get a job in the same district at 22/6 a week, his new employer realising that his experience on a rival paper might be of some value to him. By arrangement, old colleagues met in his bed-sitting room after publishing night in the first week on the new paper to hear his experiences. We found his room festooned with newspaper columns, pasted end to end and hung from wall to wall. Two young men, he told us, had been sacked when he had been taken on at 22/6 a week and he had done all the reporting work on the paper. Evidence of it hovered above our heads, columns and columns of it. We sat late discussing the conditions and pay of journalism in our time and on a promise of payment the following week, our host's landlady was induced, not without considerable persuasion, to supply the company with a bread and cheese and cocoa supper.

The N.U.J. might have been born in that bed-sitting room in East London that night had we five or six young men had the vision to see that the only means of uplifting our lot was through an organisation of working journalists. We discussed the Institute and decided that, even had we been able to afford the subscription, which we most certainly could not, it was unlikely to benefit us in any way; the proprietors would take good care of that as they had done in the past. It never occurred to us that only on sound trade union lines could any organisation be of real help to us. Unions, to our immature minds, were only for "working men." We did not regard ourselves, working for 70 to 80 hours a week, as "working men." Hence, there passed that night a great opportunity for a handful of very young reporters to become the pioneers of a great movement, the birth of which was eventually to pass to more courageous spirits in a Northern City.

Life was by no means dull in those far off days. If we had no money for entertainment there was always the free ferry at North Woolwich and free passes to certain music halls and a few suburban theatres. How many journalists, I wonder, who were working in the East End 40 years ago remember the old Victoria Music Hall at Canning Town, where stars in the making were being tried out and where the chairman still survived. If any there be in the Union to-day who sat with me at the chairman's table at the old Victoria in 1900-1, Greetings and Hail! Those were great days, in spite of everything. I covered Will Thorne's first Parliamentary election in South West Ham. His supporters threw me down the stairs of the Party Committee rooms because, aristocrat of the Tory Press, earning my 22/6 a week, I had dared to invade the stronghold of democracy in search of information for my paper. Will Thorne, entering the committee rooms at the critical moment, picked me up, took me upstairs again, and gave me all the information I sought. God bless him. Tory newspaper reporter that I was, I was sorry he was not elected.

Somewhere around 1902 John Burns started his own paper in Battersea and took the reporter from the local Conservative paper to assist in running it. The vacancy thus created fell to me and I soon found that South London needed a journalists' union quite as much as East London. Working hours and conditions generally had been bad enough in West Ham but they were far worse in Battersea, which I very soon found to my cost. Meetings lasted far into the night; Council meetings most of the night,

and that after a full day's work. Copy was always expected by nine o'clock next morning; columns of it. On one occasion the Council meeting lasted until four o'clock in the morning, and by the time I reached my lodgings it was nearly five. I sat up the rest of that morning "writing up," and whilst I was finishing breakfast at 9-30 and reading through my copy at the same time, a messenger arrived from the office to find out what had happened to me!

My usual Sunday night job was to report John Burns fully at the Town Hall and hand in my copy next morning. And this was the usual Monday morning dialogue. Editor: "Any scenes?" Reporter: "No." Ed.: "No rows?" Rep.: "No." Ed.: "Just the usual tripe?" Rep.: "Yes." Ed.: "Where's your copy?" And down it went, face downwards on his desk, ready for second use as copy paper, unwept, unhonoured and unread. Even Christmas day was a working day for the poor reporter who was made to spend the festive hours at the workhouse where he was so little welcomed that the hospitality of the paupers' Christmas dinner was not extended to him.

It was only by almost unbelievable thrift that young journalists in those days managed to save a shilling most weeks as an insurance against unemployment; perhaps the railway fare home if the blow fell Battersea gave me my one week's unemployment in 45 years. When I had saved sufficient for one week's board and lodgings and got my week's wages safely in my pocket, I summoned up all the courage at my command (a process that had taken weeks) and I told the proprietor all I thought of him, his editor and the working conditions of the office, and then announced that as from that moment I was severing my connections with the paper. He seemed staggered: probably no one had told him the truth so bluntly before. Then, remembering that I had already pocketed my 25/-, he assured me that unless I returned to duty on Monday morning, he would find me and sue me for breach of contract, no matter how long it took him. Forty years have gone by and still he has not found me, yet for a time I felt like a fugitive from justice.

In North London, where I started work a week later, I found very little improvement, although conditions were more reasonable for young men even though the pay was just as inadequate. Here, as elsewhere, there was little opportunity of advancing from the junior to the senior stage, for one junior was usually replaced by another, the stock being inexhaustible. It was therefore by no means easy to find a 30/- a week position. A politically subsidised newspaper in Westminster seemed at first to offer better opportunities, but when the paper, owing to the inexperienced management of amateurs, ceased to pay, wages were paid in post-dated cheques which were not always met at the appointed time. What, I wonder, would the Union member of to-day say to that? North West London, which embraced an area from Camden Town to Hendon and included a dozen suburbs with scores of indifferent weeklies and bi-weeklies, attracted many young men in the early 1900's, and if they stayed they found themselves "stuck" at 30/- to 35/- a week when they reached marriage age. The only hope of an income sufficient to support the most modest of homes was to work up, against tremendous competition and the opposition of the editor, a linage connection. Some reporters, in their very meagre spare time, canvassed for advertisements, on a commission basis.

Rates of wages had made little or no progress during the 15 or 20 years before the birth of the Union, neither had conditions greatly improved. Perhaps worst of all was the lack of security in jobs that seemed to come to an end almost without warning. Journalists of the Middlesex area of Greater London first heard of the Union through leaflets placed on the Press table at the Middlesex Guildhall. They were not greatly impressed, for the leaflets were not too convincing and there was a prejudice on the part of London journalists against a trade union movement that had started and had its headquarters in Manchester. "Can any good thing come out of Manchester?" they asked. Journalists, earning a wage that approximated to that of roadsweepers, had still to be convinced that

they needed a trade union, and, more important still, that it would not be derogatory. So far as Suburban London was concerned "dignity" held up the good work of the Union for some time. It was not until H. T. Hamson, of Uxbridge, got seriously to work that any real progress was made in the Western area. He was the guiding spirit in forming the nucleus of the Branch which later achieved a membership of well over 100. Taking one weekly paper after another he invited the editorial staff to meet him at a branch meeting to talk matters over, and few who met Hamson in those early years came away without signing the membership form. He was the ideal pioneer in an area that might be expected to be biased against a trade union and he very soon began to break down all opposition. Forthright and outspoken in his views, he was yet moderate and reasonable in their expression. His sincerity and disinterestedness made a direct appeal to all who met him on this question of the N.U.J. For years his efforts went on with unabated zeal and proved a very real inspiration to the younger men who rallied round him. He was always prepared to do the hack work of the branch and leave the honours to other men less deserving of them. For years Hamson *was* the Union in West London and he laid the foundations of a prosperous branch that has done much useful work.

Once the membership had been built up and every district in the area represented, there came the real fight, for a living wage. In those days we laid our cards on the table and were not surprised to find that without exception we shared the common lot, long hours for little pay. Even so, it took courage to make a start on bringing in the Golden Age for which the Union had been launched. Men were still afraid to press their claims for increased wages. Most of them had already suffered for their boldness and now with families dependent upon them, they were reluctant to take risks which might throw them on the unemployment market. There was still an ample supply of 25/- a week men only too ready and willing to take their 35/- a week job. At long last, the time came for action. Collective bargaining was all very well, and the Union officials were doing that, but still hundreds of suburban journalists were not getting the benefit for which the fight was going on. In the end it meant interviews in every individual office in the attempt to get the first modest minimum wage, a minimum that we knew was going to be the maximum for a very long time to come, for proprietors seemed incapable of taking seriously a union for journalists.

Records are still in existence of some of those interviews. Some proprietors sought to bribe the office leader of the movement with the wage demanded on condition that he kept the good news to himself and ceased to worry about his colleagues. That was a move that never succeeded in West London. Others "sacked" the leader as an agitator. But the movement gathered strength. Men, for the most part, stood loyally together as they had never done before and gradually in all offices there was a general levelling up of both wages and conditions. But the fight was not won with the first increase. Soon it had to be fought all over again, and in the fight many men who by their own personal effort had made themselves indispensable to their paper, sacrificed brighter prospects for the sake of less fortunate colleagues. The Union had given birth to a new spirit of comradeship. With the passing of the years, with triumphant victories to the credit of the Union, there came into the branches a new generation of men who had missed the early struggles and bitter experiences of the older journalists. It was difficult to make them realise the change that had happened in the past decade and perhaps at first their enthusiasm for the Union was not quite the same. Some there were who believed that conditions and pay would not deteriorate even though the Union disappeared and left them without the necessity of paying the monthly subscription—the very small price of the security and comparatively good pay they enjoyed, largely, and perhaps solely, because of the Union.

This, however, by no means applied to all the young men. Some came to an early realisation of the great benefits the Union had conferred upon

them and they took their membership seriously. It was soon noticed that it was the good trade unionists who regularly attended the branch meetings and shared in the conferences and rallies. In West London this applied to about 20 per cent. of the members and perhaps half of them were young men for whom the fight had already been won before they came into journalism. "No journalist can serve the cause of his Union who persistently neglects to attend his branch meetings," might well be the slogan of the N.U.J. Those who have been closely associated with branch work for 20 years and more, know beyond a shadow of a doubt that only those who keep in the closest touch with affairs by attending meetings are in a position to give that service that will send the Union on from strength to strength. If the N.U.J. is to hold all that it has won in the tremendous struggle of the past 30 years; it if is to achieve yet new triumphs, it will not be by 100 per cent. membership alone, but by 100 per cent. interest in the work, which will mean well attended branch meetings and a *nil* return of arrears of contributions.

CHAPTER XXI.

"THE UNION HAS A SOUL."

I believe in collective bargaining and I believe in this Union because its object is not only to raise the remuneration of the worker, but also his status. It is a Union which has a soul as well as a body. (*Lord Riddell at the Union's coming-of-age dinner*, 1928.)

Journalism was meant to be the voice from below (*democracy*). *The peril is that it has become the voice from above* (*plutocracy*). *I see no remedy but democratic organisation of journalists, and therefore I drink your health.* (*G. K. Chesterton in a telegram to a Union dinner*, 1911).

ONE likes to think in moments of exaltation that gratitude is due not only to those who have borne the brunt of the struggle for improvement in terms of material benefit, but also to those *illuminati* of the spiritual order whose ideals have touched to finer issues the daily round and common tasks of Union effort. No little encouragement in this direction was given when Lord Riddell, amid the dinner-table pleasantries of which he was such a master, struck a deeper chord by speaking of the Union's soul. In his mouth it was specially striking, for he was a shrewd man of business, the millionaire of the world's biggest circulation, the titular head of the national press of London and its *liaison* officer in Whitehall. Once he told an American interviewer that he was not a blood peer, but he was a blood trade unionist. He was in fact an honorary member of Natsopa, the militant union in the newspaper industry. All along the N.U.J., while necessarily recognising the basic importance of

economic justice and security, has given attention to those many questions, not directly concerning pounds, shillings and pence, which affect journalists as professional men, as craftsmen, as citizens—questions of personal honour and public responsibility. This chapter deals with those phases of Union activity.

First I will quote some of the tributes paid by well-known men to the Union, which are fitly led by the messages given above. In 1928 a book issued by the International Labour Office dealt with world-wide conditions of journalistic work and life. It stated that the N.U.J. was numerically the strongest professional organisation of journalists in the world and observed: "The activity of the N.U.J. in safeguarding professional interests is noteworthy and the results which it has obtained are of the highest importance." When we were rejoicing at our first great success in getting a lift-up from the London proprietors at the close of 1917 a notable interview was given by the editor of the *Daily Chronicle* (Mr. Robert Donald as he then was) to Tom Foster. Agreeing almost entirely with the Union's economic policy he said: "Your members show a fine democratic spirit. Many of them give a great deal of disinterested service. They encourage a community of interest and comradeship and create enthusiasm. Wherever this fine spirit is shown there must be a great moral issue that stimulates it. What seems to me to animate your policy is a desire to raise the men at the bottom to obtain a living professional salary and to restrain the youthful enthusiasts who are ready to offer their services at the beginning at miserably low rates, by proving to them that their individual action is against the common good of the whole profession." When he was Labour candidate for London University in 1922 H. G. Wells sent a message to the Union, of which he was a member. Urging the importance of journalistic organisation he wrote: "We affect opinion and public and private life profoundly, and we need to cherish any scrap of independence we possess and can secure. We are not mere hirelings; our work is creative and responsible work. The activities of rich adventurers in buying, and directing the policy of, groups of newspapers is a grave public danger. A free-spirited, well-paid, and well-organised profession of journalism is our only protection against the danger."

One of the little band of statesmen-members of the Union, Philip Snowden, spoke in 1928 in an intimate and touching way of the early struggles of which he had personal memories. "Amongst the romances of trade union development in the last

quarter of a century," he said, " there is none, I think, more romantic, more remarkable, and more encouraging than the growth of trade unionism among journalists. I am sure there is no trade union which has done more—I doubt if there is one which has done so much—to improve the working conditions of a craft than the National Union of Journalists. I am proud to be associated with a Union which is so energetic, enthusiastic, hopeful and tolerant." In the same speech Snowden feared that the younger men who had come into the profession would never realise the conditions that the founders had to face and fight and the difficulties they had to overcome. The author of this book fondly hopes that it will serve to defeat that foreboding.

Two testimonies of quite a different kind may be noted. One comes from a German journalist, Kurt von Stutterheim, who was the correspondent in London for a leading German daily for ten years, and who has given us in his book, " The Press in England," an excellent epitome of its history, and its position in 1934. With a touch of alien naivety he says : " The Union has done much to remove the last traces of disreputableness formerly attaching to the profession. To-day the sons of the best families, like Winston Churchill in his day, are anxious to obtain posts in Fleet Street. It must be stated that the English journalists have proved entirely worthy of this promotion to gentlemanly rank : there is no such thing as press corruption in the big London and provincial papers. Undesirable practices exist, but these are the fault of the trusts which transfer papers from hand to hand, and subject journalists to a test of loyalty which inevitably proves too strong for some." The other quotation is from Mr. J. Hall Richardson's book " From the City to Fleet Street." He had a notable career on the *Daily Telegraph*, and as a managerial representative on the N.P.A., he was one of the Council to whom we as a Union deputation made our first appeal. In a sort of catechism for young journalists he has the following frank passage : " Is it necessary to join a Union ? Whether you like it or not, young sir (I am addressing the budded journalist) you must elect to serve under the flag of the Union (which is red) or the Institute (which is, or was, red, too—the colour of its tape). To the former the working journalist owes his status, his fixed hours (theoretically) and his salary. To the latter his professional distinction and aura, chiefly enjoyed by newspaper proprietors, editors, leader writers and lady contributors. There is also a mysterious ' circle ' to which musical critics are admitted."

It is a rare thing for the Union to pay a formal tribute to a proprietor. When Mr. C. P. Scott, for more than half a century proprietor and editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, died in 1932 the Union Executive placed on record its sense of the great loss to journalism, its appreciation of the part he played in maintaining the highest standards of the craft, and its gratitude for the active support he gave the Union from its earliest days. Never was praise more justified. One expression by Mr. Scott of the ideal which he always strove to put into practice has become a classic in Press literature. Here it is:

> Fundamentally it implies honesty, cleanness, courage, fairness, and a sense of duty to the reader and the community. The newspaper is of necessity something of a monopoly, and its first duty is to shun the temptations of a monopoly. Its primary office is the gathering of news. At the peril of its soul it must see that the supply is not tainted. Neither in what it gives, nor in what it does not give, nor in the mode of presentation, must the unclouded face of Truth suffer wrong. Comment is free, but facts are sacred. Propaganda so-called by this means is hateful. The voice of opponents no less than that of friends, has a right to be heard. Comment is also justly subject to a self-imposed restraint. It is well to be frank; it is even better to be fair.

Both interest and inspiration are kindled in reading the *Journalist* to note how frequently matters of conscience are raised by correspondents in the rank and file. It has fallen to me in preparing this book to go carefully through my file of our Union journal from 1908 to 1943, and to feel a responsive chord to these stirrings of the spirit. Take a few random examples. A member writes in 1924: "The N.U.J. stands for more than money-grubbing, the squeezing of an extra pound or two from the pockets of the proprietors. It stands for justice and the elementary rights of its members." One goes further and anticipates a prominent slogan of to-day: "Service before profit." Another nourishes the ideal of honesty: "Journalists must not be the obedient slaves of the political trickster, the commercial racketeer, the financial exploiter, but must have a sense of responsibility to the standards of fair conduct." Nearly 30 years ago Hugh Redwood, when thanked by Central London for a useful piece of work with the Central News, said that if it had been the hardest task in the world he would have been glad enough to tackle it, now that he had seen for himself what excellent work the Union was doing. "My conscience has been a good deal quickened since I have been on the Central London Committee," he confessed.

In the present year, 1943, a Service member writes as one who has read newspapers for three years without writing for them:

" When they return to newspaper work, soldiers, sailors and airmen who were journalists, may look to their Union not only as the guarantor of minimum salaries, but also as a body of their fellows, through which, as a unified organisation of professional writers, they can perpetuate the idealism bred of disillusionment. We must all of us work to make the N.U.J. stronger and stronger. Then we can tell the truth." In 1917, when the Great War was at its height, Central London could give attention to the honour of journalism, as affected by a libel case in which a notorious London weekly paper was cast in damages. Counsel described this periodical as living on sensation and sometimes frank indecency. The Branch gravely discussed the case as an odious reflection on the whole profession, and some contended that a profession, some of whose members were thus publicly charged, ought not to be indifferent to the imputation. The professions of law and medicine, through their organisations, were careful, it was pointed out, to make inquiries when the conduct of any of their members was seriously aspersed, and to take drastic action when the aspersions were deserved. The question was put—should it not be the function of the N.U.J. to act in the same way as the guardian of the profession's honour? The answer came in time in the Code of Conduct, the general prohibitions of which, in the absence of any categorical negative on this particular phase of misconduct, could be reasonably held to cover it. Certain weekly papers relied on " smut " for their chief attraction, and although much of that stuff was doubtless contributed by outside writers journalists accepted it, presented it, and lived on it. Hence the Union could not evade responsibility, and inaction weakened its power at a time when it was intending to make a big drive for greater power and recognition.

Another issue raised in correspondence bore relation to a different phase of morality. It is culled from the *Journalist* in what may be called its Augustan days—when Haslam as editor used to give us twenty-four and more fat pages full of news, topical and technical articles, and letters galore on live subjects. One series of articles, to which many of us contributed, dealt with our craft in its various departments. " The art of leader writing " fell naturally to H. M. Richardson, who mixed a deal of cynicism with his pleasantries and advices. Having written leaders for papers of many political colours he claimed to be entitled to a certificate for cynicism. With that warrant he laid down several formulas: the leader writer must acquire ability to look at any

question through imposed spectacles; he need not have any opinions of his own; probably he will be happier if he goes to the office with an open, or even a blank, mind: it is not essential that he should have a well-informed mind, but he must master the science of ready assimilation of information and the art of expression. It was persiflage, with a serious undertone, and mixed of course with some sound pieces of advice.

My point is that it met with some prompt protests from "conscientious objectors." Arthur J. Cummings declared that any applicant for the job of leader writing who professed Richardson's "cynical, and contradictory, negatives" would go away empty, for the writer would have no use for that particular brand of moral imbecile. Admitting that it was increasingly difficult for the journalist to preserve at all times his "intellectual conscience" intact, he said he had yet to see weak-minded and weak-kneed men going very far in Fleet Street. Surely it was wrong, however, to suggest to those on the threshold of their career that their work was on the level of a fraudulent Cheap-Jack, and that to remain servile, ignorant and vacuous was the best qualification for journalistic success. If Richardson took this attitude in his official Union contacts it might provide some explanation of "the persistently low standards of efficiency and education" which so many deplored. "Another leader writer" regarded the article as lamentable—"if the leading official of the Union can give no better counsel to young journalists than to sell their souls for their mess of pottage with a grin, and make the best of it, then we shall all do better to go potato-hoeing."

Independence is another fruit of the spirit. Although in a limited way, a ruling of the Executive about a year ago (May, 1942) asserted this principle and was a sign of healthy Union vigilance. Certain members drew attention to the request of the police in one locality to a reporter attending a meeting to supply them with a transcript of his notes. A warning was issued to all branches about the undesirability of accepting such commissions, even though the order was given as a matter of business and payment made. A reporter attends a meeting as a representative of the Press and the organisers of the meeting understand that he is there in that capacity and not as a representative of the police. It is important that his independence in that capacity should be unchallengeable. It would probably happen that at sometime a reporter who took a note for the police would be called as a witness in Court and this would

damage his reputation in the public mind. Also it would prejudice his standing in his district with people associated with various institutions and movements. A lesser danger was inherent in supplying reports to organisations other than the one organising the meeting. The principle underlined by the N.E.C. was that the reputation of the Press reporter for independence is of the utmost importance and is part of the strength of a free Press. When I was a young reporter these " official notes," as we termed them, were a welcome addition to small incomes, and it is very much to the good that the Union has won an economic independence for its members which justifies it in banning an outside source of income on grounds of principle.

This talk about the police carries me back nearly thirty years when I was one of a deputation from Central London to Scotland Yard. It arose out of a railwaymen's meeting, at which Mr. J. H. Thomas disclosed that a man seated at the Press table was not a journalist but a police officer sent to take notes for Scotland Yard. This man first said he represented a certain London daily paper, but afterwards admitted his real identity. The incident, called the " police spy case." caused resentment in Fleet Street. The Assistant Commissioner received us courteously and it was agreed that no police note-taker should sit at the Press table in future, and that Pressmen should not be asked to take notes with a view to criminal prosecutions.

Within the last few years the methods of sensational journalism have become invested with a sinister significance. This kind of journalism is far from new; in fact it is as old as the Press itself. Some of those who have studied our earliest papers will agree with Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld when he says that sixteenth century journalists were adepts in the arts of yellow journalism, and that " no modern newspaper could rival the news records of that time for sensationalism." One of the claims made for Victorian journalism is that it raised the dignity and standing of the profession, but if H. W. Lucy is right that is only partly true, for he says that in the middle of that era " sensationalism of a lurid type pervaded the cheap Press." Fleet Street had not redeemed its character forty years ago, according to the picture presented by Philip Gibbs in his " Street of Adventure." The young man in his novitiate on a big daily paper had to take the news of a man's arrest on a charge of murder to a wife who was giving an at-home in a suburban house. " He could never forget the look of horror, her cry of anguish, nor his own deep shame at

having to do such work in the interests of sensational journalism."

Really the problem has always been with us ever since the first crude sheets, replete with horrors and marvels, were published. Why then has it aroused such widespread interest, and such profound public indignation, at this time of day ? It may well be that it is the result of an ascending scale of taste and judgment applied to the Press, with a keener edge of social ethics, though of course those who exploit sensation defend their malpractices with the brazen assertion that they are really "giving the public what they want." The question has become so acute in recent times that newspaper organisations have been compelled to give it serious attention, on grounds of safety as well as of morality. The Union has kept a vigilant eye upon it, for the good name of the working journalist is directly involved.

An early awareness of the matter is shown in the Union's first rule, which includes among the objects of the new Society: "to deal with questions affecting the professional conduct of its members." In 1908 the A.D.M. was moved to protest against the practice of employing convicted murderers and criminals as journalists, and to consider how to prevent its extension. Years passed and then in 1931 the evil had become so pressing that the N.E.C. issued a considered warning. Reporters and Press photographers were often asked to use methods in the "collection of news and variation in news," which were distressing to the people to whom they were applied, and often repugnant to the sense of decency of those who used them. As practical men the Executive realised that the competition for exclusive and speedy news rendered it difficult for Pressmen always to act with that consideration and delicacy which in less strenuous days were customary. An appeal was addressed to proprietors, editors and managers to endeavour to come to a common understanding as to the limits of licence which should be allowed to, or imposed upon, their staffs. One case cited was the notorious Exmoor mystery, in which the conduct of some journalists ("happily not members of the Union") was "reprehensible in the highest degree." While these methods might bring immediate benefit to the papers which took advantage of them, they tended to weaken public confidence in the reliability, judgment, good sense and good taste of the Press. This protest found dramatic re-inforcement in letters to *The Times* by prominent public persons who had suffered by the offences. Unfortunately they brought innocent journalists under a common

stigma and made it increasingly difficult for them to do their work. A point of substance was raised. These methods so discredited the papers, it was contended, that they were driven to seek other sources of circulation than the dissemination of news. The allusion was to the frantic and costly efforts to get readers by canvassing and gifts. There has been a return to common sense since, and Mr. John Cowley, chairman of the *Daily Mirror*, was able recently (May, 1943) to declare that "the old follies of gift schemes, canvassing, and free insurance have disappeared into newspaper history, and I trust that history will not repeat itself."

The practical proposals of the N.E.C. were that reporters should not be permitted to intrude into the private lives of private people; that they should not usurp the functions of official or private detectives, and that they should confine their activities to the reporting of, and commenting on, facts. An important reflection was that the desire for sensational news might frequently prejudice the course of justice. Some papers found the truth of this to their cost when penalised for contempt of court. In a hortatory passage which the occasion seemed to warrant the N.E.C. said: "There seems to be a tendency on the part of some to assume that the world was made for the sole purpose of providing copy for the newspapers. There should be more restraint, more reticence and a greater sense of responsibility." To implement all this the N.E.C. promised to give moral and financial support to any member who suffered for refusing to carry out instructions repugnant to his sense of decency, on the recommendation of the branch concerned; asked chapels to consider instructions which were improper; and directed that if a free lance refused to accept work of an objectionable character, other members of the Union must refuse to do it in his stead.

Proprietors were forced to take some steps about this growing public scandal. Lady A. Ellerman wrote a protest against the conduct of Press photographers on her arrival from the Continent and subsequently at the funeral of Sir John Ellerman. Other indignant victims took the same course. The Newspaper Society, in a published memorandum, said they found it impossible to discover the identity of the offending photographers and concluded that they were not accredited representatives of provincial newspapers—with the accent on "provincial." The incident was "an unusual and unfortunate example of a tendency created by severe competition between popular newspapers." They felt

it impossible to lay down a code for photographers and reporters, and that the only possible method was to stimulate the strong feeling already existing within the industry. In a memorandum to its members the Society said that these cases of misguided keenness and enterprise lowered the prestige of the Press and created a danger of the withdrawal of facilities at present enjoyed. In more vigorous style the Chief Constable of Blackburn, addressing the Union Branch there, said some papers gloried in sensationalism; if they could find anything sordid or gory they dished it up with the biggest headlines. The suicide mania, he declared, was fed by gruesome stories in the papers. There was a hint of the possible danger of curtailment of the liberty of the reporter to print all that was said at inquests, unless due heed were given to the distinction between liberty and licence.

Conceptions of policy dealing with this thorny subject began to take shape and so in 1934 the Hartlepools came before the A.D.M. with a proposal for a Code of Professional Conduct. There was a tendency, which spread to the Executive itself, to pooh-pooh the idea, and Richardson was inclined to treat it in an off-hand manner. Hard-bitten economists of the strictly materialist type seemed to think that this, like education, was not the real business of the Union. But Raybould made a strong appeal for its serious consideration, Foster backed him up, and it was referred to a sub-committee. A draft code was discussed in the following year, but it was "referred back." One critic urged that they ought to enforce 100 per cent. trade unionism and leave the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes to the parsons. A shrewd reply was that the Union was concerned with the Eleventh Commandment—that of brotherly love. Closer attention was given, Foster drafted a Code one inspired night in his office, and there was a big and detailed debate at the 1936 A.D.M. Some said it was all window-dressing, others that the Code prohibited things which it did not define, and many were in real difficulty. Nevertheless, after the document was dissected clause by clause, it was hammered into a shape which the conference adopted. It was something like the process of running a newspaper by a committee instead of a responsible individual. After this collective sub-editing, in which the author of the copy joined in the revision of his own work, this new and significant expression of the Union conscience passed into the archives in the following final form, which was entitled a "Code of Professional Conduct" and is now an appendix to the book of rules :

Like other trade unions, formed for mutual protection and economic betterment, the National Union of Journalists desires and encourages its members to maintain good quality of workmanship and high standard of conduct.

Through years of courageous struggle for better wages and working conditions its pioneers and their successors have kept these aims in mind, and have made provision in Union rules not only for penalties on offenders, but for the guidance and financial support of members who may suffer loss of work for conforming to Union principles.

While punishment by fine, suspension or expulsion is provided for in cases of " conduct detrimental to the interests of the Union," any member who is victimised (Rule 10, clause 3) for refusing to do work . . . " incompatible with the honour and the interests of the profession," may rely on adequate support from Union funds.

A member of the Union has two claims on his loyalty—one by his Union and one by his employer. These need not clash so long as the employer complies with the agreed Union conditions and makes no demand for forms of service incompatible with the honour of the profession or with the principles of trade unionism.

1. A member should do nothing that would bring discredit on himself, his Union, his newspaper, or his profession. He should study the rules of his Union, and should not, by commission or omission, act against the interests of the Union.

2. Unless the employer consents to a variation, a member who wishes to terminate his employment must give notice, according to agreement or professional custom.

3. No member should seek promotion or seek to obtain the position of another journalist by unfair methods. A member should not, directly or indirectly, attempt to obtain for himself or anyone else any commission, regular or occasional, held by a free-lance member of the Union.

4. It is unprofessional conduct to exploit the labour of another journalist by plagiarism, or by using his copy for linage purposes without permission.

5. Staff men who do linage work should be prepared to give up such work to conform with any pooling scheme approved by the N.E.C., or any Union plan to provide a free-lance member with a means of earning a living.

6. A member holding a staff appointment shall serve first the paper that employs him. In his own time a member is free to engage in other creative work, but he should not undertake any extra work in his rest time or holidays if by so doing he is depriving an out-of-work member of a chance to obtain employment. Any misuse of rest days—won by the Union on the sound argument that periods of recuperation are needed after strenuous hours of labour—is damaging to trade union aims for a shorter working week.

7. While a spirit of willingness to help other members should be encouraged at all times, members are under a special obligation of honour to help an unemployed member to obtain work.

8. Every journalist should treat subordinates as considerately as he would desire to be treated by his superiors.

9. Freedom in the honest collection and publication of news facts, and the rights of fair comment and criticism, are principles which every journalist should defend.

10. A journalist should fully realise his personal responsibility for everything he sends to his paper or agency. He should keep Union and professional secrets, and respect all necessary confidences regarding sources of information and private documents. He should not falsify information or documents, or distort or misrepresent facts.

11. In obtaining news or pictures, reporters and Press photographers should do nothing that will cause pain or humiliation to innocent, bereaved, or otherwise distressed persons. News, pictures, and documents should be acquired by honest methods only.

12. Every journalist should keep in mind the dangers in the laws of libel, contempt of court, and copyright. In reports of law court proceedings it is necessary to observe and practice the rule of fair play to all parties.
13. Whether for publication or suppression, the acceptance of a bribe by a journalist is one of the gravest professional offences.

Although the Code was now " on the record " it was not a time for the Union to sit back at ease. During 1937 the storm continued in full blast, and the President (F. G. Humphrey) was the leader of an active campaign. He proclaimed that if this cult of sensationalism was allowed to proceed until vast numbers of people were affronted, a first-class case would be presented to the people who demanded the restriction of Press freedom. " While we have a trade union basis we have at heart the vital interests of every member of the profession, not only in bread-and-butter politics, but also in matters of dignity and status." He called the Code to witness the Union's earnestness and clung to the idea of co-operation between proprietors and Union as the most effective method of stopping intrusions on privacy. In a biting phrase he (a provincial man himself) said that Fleet Street was chiefly guilty of putting human souls on the rack, for the provinces mainly observed the canons of good taste. This placing of the guilt found supporters at Liverpool, who deprecated the conduct of representatives of the national papers in London, " in the intrusion on private grief and muck-raking at the conclusion of Court cases." In the *Journalist* J. G. Gregson was indignant about a film called " Sensation," which professed to be a faithful mirror of " Fleet Street's reaction to crime." It pictured the disgusting methods of gangs of crime reporters, and how the star man, featured as the " hero," at last "chucked the whole dirty business." Surely, exclaimed Gregson, the murder scoop racket cannot be so rotten as here depicted! A member of the Union told how, when his brother was prostrated with grief at a fatal accident to his wife, " a ghoulish minority of the Press visited his house with requests for pictures and interviews. One actually demanded a personal statement within five or six hours of the tragedy, although told that he was too ill to see anybody. Telephone calls, hammering at the door, peals of the bell at the house of death—and then the bloodthirsty horde pursued their inquiries to the graveside at Hull."

Alarm and disgust at these enormities were registered at the 1937 A.D.M., which foresaw that, if they continued, legislative control might come, which would be inimical to the interests of journalists and a menace to the freedom of the Press. In a

resolution sent to the Government and the newspaper proprietorial bodies, the N.E.C. noted with satisfaction the condemnations which had been expressed and offered the fullest co-operation with efforts to stamp out the malpractices of a small minority in the collection of news. The Institute of Journalists took advantage of the crisis to claim that the way to deal with the evil was to support their Registration Bill which would provide a Council able to strike offenders against proper standards of conduct off the proposed register of journalists. The Union reply was that their Code, with sanctions, was better than setting up an outside body of control in which the will of the workers would not necessarily be predominant.

A further word may be said to clear our guardians of morals of the taint of pharisaism. This is not the place for an essay on good taste and decency in print, which is so often the subject of high debate among journalistic craftsmen, and never fails to arouse conflict. It came inevitably when the Code was considered. Many have defended a little licence in the presentation of a "good story," with a spice of wickedness in it, and a tinge of the *Pink 'Un*. Was it not a pardonable savour of the old Bohemianism? Hence the advocates of the Code had to stand against banter and ridicule. Most of the trouble centres in the treatment of crime and sex stories, which sub-editors have at times to "disinfect." The public, however varied and catholic its choice in reading, has a broad standard of morality which condemns breaches of good taste, human delicacy and decorum in its newspapers. The tales of Edgar Allan Poe; "Murder as a fine art" by De Quincey; Sherlock Holmes and the myriad thrillers since, are all "sensational," but there is a difference, for they do not offend the canons as does the low-down kind of journalism which exploits the bawdy and the horrific and cares not how it gets its stories of frailty, folly, crime and the abnormal. There is plenty of healthy thrill in life without raking the sewers. Many styles of journalism, both of the plain and the coloured varieties, are practised without provoking decent, good-mannered people. It is the sensationalism which goes beyond that which must be banned. Not even a prude would object to an occasional excursion into those "flowery meads of sensationalism" of which J. St. Loe Strachey playfully accused Meredith Townsend, and it would be laughable if anyone asked for the Code to be applied to the *Spectator*. Strachey has a tolerant word for the leaning towards sensationalism which

belongs to so many journalists "and which is probably a beneficial part of their equipment."

There is a vast amount of topsy-turvy sensationalism in life which the newspaper can lay bare, but there is much that is morbid and unhealthy, which the wholesome paper treats as forbidden fruit. It is considered an advantage to society that the doctor, who is responsible for the bodily health of his patients, should be subject to professional standards and codes which are primarily moral standards. May not the journalist be of such a value to society that he also should be amenable to similar standards? Demarcations are sometimes difficult and it must be realised that denunciations which offenders have brought on their heads have not been mainly based on the subject matter so much as on the indecent and unfeeling aggressiveness with which stories have been pursued. The Union Code wisely avoids the debatable ground and deals with the "conduct" of the journalist. It declares what everybody can understand when it condemns action which causes pain or humiliation to innocent, bereaved or otherwise distressed persons. Given abstention from this the rest is really a matter of compliance with the statute law, and of good taste and opinion.

There has so far, I understand, been only one case in which action has been taken under the disciplinary rule applicable to the Code. It was in 1939, and was a complaint sent by a branch for Executive decision. The facts were that a picture paper sent a reporter and photographer to get a "follow-up" of a police court case, in which a young man had been convicted of stealing money and had pleaded that he was penniless, his wife was sick and needed nourishment which he was unable to get. The "sick wife" angle suggested a story of the kind the paper was running at the time. The result was a story headed "Stole to Save Sick Bride," with a picture showing the wife in bed, by the side of which the husband sat caressing her. Local journalists naturally jealous for their own reputation for accuracy and decency obtained the facts. It was shown that the "sick bride" and her husband were out and about when the visiting journalists found them. The husband stated that they persuaded them to return to their home, his wife to undress and go to bed and pose for the picture as it was printed. The charge made was that the two journalists were responsible for a photograph and report which conveyed a false impression and was inaccurate and misleading, with the result that the paper's readers sent money for

an undeserving couple.

The Stipendary Magistrate who heard the case said that the spurious account had produced false sympathy for a man who was not a hero, and was journalism of the lowest possible kind. He made it clear that it was not done by the reporters who habitually attended his court, nor by a local newspaper. To the accused husband he said: "If sensation-mongering journalists come to ask you to pose for a photograph in such circumstances again have nothing more to do with them." Having received full statements from both sides the Executive decided that the reporter concerned had been guilty of a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct and should be severely cautioned and reminded that the Union was always willing to protect a member who refused to do work which would be an offence against the Code. The member who brought the case to notice was thanked. Although an appeal to the Code is so rare, it stands a warning to potential wrongdoers. On the difficult issue of the limits of journalistic propriety the Executive in 1940 sent a letter to branches expressing its opinion that the interviewing of persons who had lost near relatives through the war would not necessarily be an intrusion into private grief, but that when members were asked to do anything which offended their sense of decency, they should report to the N.E.C.

What is a journalist's supreme loyalty, or rather what should it be? No less a question than this was raised in a positive form as an issue in the printers' national strike of 1922. This matter is so vital that the facts must be put on record. The master printers, and the proprietors in the Newspaper Society, proposed a cut in printers' wages. It was a tendency of the time. But for Lord Northcliffe's determined stand against it in London the reduction movement would have gathered way there. The Typographical Association opposed the cut and there was a lock-out. The Ministry of Labour suggested the reference of the dispute to an Industrial Court. This was agreed to and the T.A. officers signed a document agreeing to the submission of the dispute "for settlement," on the strength of which the employers withdrew the lock-out notices. But the rules of the T.A. required the consent of the rank and file before a settlement could be accepted. So when the parties came before the Court the President of the T.A. made it clear that whatever award was made would have to be submitted to a ballot of the whole Union. Nevertheless the employers proceeded with their case, and won

a favourable verdict. The ballot was adverse and the T.A. called a national strike, refusing to join a suggested conference of unions. The other unions naturally assumed that the T.A. was not anxious for their support and the P. & K.T.F. recommended its affiliated bodies to carry on their own work in their own departments. In an article in the *Journalist* Richardson, for the N.U.J., said:

Some of our members, not satisfied with the continuance of their own work, did work outside their departments, and blacklegged in the most flagrant manner possible. Some worked linos, others set up at case, and others made up on the stone. Various explanations were offered. Some said that they were helping to beat men who had broken an agreement (which was inaccurate), or had downed tools without giving formal notice. It was the opinion of all sound trade-unionists that nothing could justify one man doing the work of another man who was on strike or locked-out. If journalists downed tools to enforce a demand would they expect T.A. men to report meetings, sub-edit copy or do other journalistic work? They would resent such conduct bitterly. I am certain that the T.A. executive would forbid such action and that T.A. members would obey their executive. The solidarity of the mechanical workers is much keener than that of the N.U.J. Trade unions must obey executive orders, so long as the orders are not in violation of trade union principles. Some of our defiant members protested that their livelihood would be jeopardised if they had not done the printers' work. But what shall it profit a union if half-a-dozen members win the respect of their employers (which probably they don't) by doing dirty work, and cause the Union to lose the respect and friendship of all the other workers in the industry? Some day we may have to look for allies. We shall not find them if our Union is branded as a union which seizes upon the irregularities or mistakes of other unions as an excuse for allowing its members to play the part of blacklegs.

Very few N.U.J. members incurred this censure, but three or four branches were involved. At Leeds the dispute became critical and there was a significant correspondence. In one evening newspaper office reporters had been instructed to do typographical work, under threat of dismissal if they refused. The Leeds branch of the N.U.J. issued instructions, in accord with Executive policy, to members to confine their labours to their professional duties. The resolution was sent to the editors of the four newspapers in Leeds. Mr. Arthur Mann, the editor of the *Yorkshire Post*, in reply sent his views "as a journalist" to the Branch:

Obedience to the instruction might prevent a journalist who is a member of the Union from doing work within his capacity which is vital to the efficient production of his newspaper. In withholding that service he acts against the essential spirit of journalism, which compels loyalty to the paper one serves. Putting loyalty to his trade union before loyalty to his paper, where one conflicts with the other, he may be a good trade unionist but can hardly be a good journalist in the truest sense of the term. I can imagine circumstances . . . in which a journalist might feel that even his loyalty to his paper is over-ridden by loyalty to his fellow workers . . . Such circumstances did not exist in this dispute, he argued, for the parties agreed to refer their case to the Court for settlement. Locally there was no suggestion that members of the N.U.J. or other unions had been

treated unfairly or ungenerously ; therefore the Branch instruction, without the slightest justification, sought to compel its members to be disloyal to the first principle of the profession.

The Branch replied that without obedience to Union instructions organisation in industry would give place to chaos. Members of proprietors' federations were expected loyally to follow the instructions of those bodies, and the Union did the same. It was readily acknowledged that the N.U.J. had no complaint against the *Yorkshire Post*, and " another office," of unfair or ungenerous treatment of its members. The Branch could not admit that it sought to make members disloyal to " the first principle of their profession either with or without justification." In one Leeds office members were told under threat to do the work of men on strike. For their protection instructions were sent to members in all offices where they were employed. Mr. Mann was thanked for not putting Union members in any embarrassing position. The general sentiment of the Branch was, it was conceded, that the award of the Industrial Court should have been accepted by the T.A. In his rejoinder Mr. Mann said the chief issue was not the question of obedience to instructions, but the instructions themselves, which he contended were contrary to the true spirit of journalism in seeking to compel journalists to refrain from helping their paper in an emergency. In view of the Branch admission that the printers took the wrong course it seemed to him that members put loyalty to fellow trade unionists adjudged to be taking an unjustifiable course before their duty to their paper, which should be the first consideration. The Leeds Branch received the thanks of the Father of the Chapel, *Yorkshire Post* typographical section, for the stand they took in the dispute. Upon the maxim which was the core of Mr. Mann's contention a terse comment was made in the *Journalist*, by its editor, Thomas Jay : " The conception of a journalist as a devoted servant can be carried until he becomes a devoted doormat. The newer journalist claims as high a conception of his profession as the older school, in a profession made worth while through the N.U.J., in raising the economic position of a poorly paid profession, which has resulted in a higher conception of the dignity of the profession." The rules governing disputes were strengthened by empowering the Executive to give instructions in accordance with the rules and constitution of the P. & K.T.F. If a member disobeyed those instructions he could be fined, sus-

pended or expelled, subject to a right of appeal to the next A.D.M.

Speaking broadly the Union has kept clear of politics, at any rate in a party sense, which is natural for a body counting among its members persons of differing political loyalties. This does not mean, however, that it has failed to keep a vigilant eye on legislation affecting the rights and interests of journalists. Readers of the earlier portions of this book will have noted valuable legislative action by the Union. Certain episodes of recent times, though more fresh in memory, must be briefly recorded. Newspaper bodies were mildly excited in the early 1920's by a bill designed to curtail the right to report in detail judicial proceedings which contained "indecent matter or medical, surgical or physiological details, the publication of which would be calculated to injure public morals or otherwise be to the public mischief." To the outsider the issue was rather clouded by the fact that Mr. F. Peaker, President of the Institute of Journalists, was a strong advocate, if not an actual promoter, of the Bill, and his claim that the majority of journalists welcomed it was apt to be taken at its face value. The Newspaper Society was in opposition, and the Union, led by a Manchester agitation, fastened on the danger of the Bill to the working journalist, apart from the more general point of the wisdom or otherwise of suppressing evidence in the Divorce Court. Apparently the Bill was dead in 1924, but it was a case of premature burial, for the lead of Sir Evelyn Cecil in the Commons was taken up by Lord Darling in the Lords. Again the Union fought for the protection of the working journalist, and successfully, for when the measure became law in 1926 responsibility was put on the right shoulders. A clause provided "that no person other than a proprietor, editor, master printer or publisher," should be liable to conviction.

Responsible opinion has tended since to regard the Act as a failure as an instrument of public policy. Lord Hewart made this comment: "The critics of publicity were deeply concerned lest the minds of readers should be shocked. But perhaps they paid too little consideration to the view that the fear of publicity was precisely one of the chief deterrents in the way of those who desired, or feared, divorce." The Act precluded the publication of all but formal and colourless facts in proceedings for divorce, nullity, separation, or restitution of conjugal rights, with this important exception, that the observations of judges in summing up, or giving judgment, might be given. Many judges object

to taking cases *in camera* and some, notably the President of the Divorce Court at that time, believed in the value of wholesome publicity. They carried their views into effect by disclosing facts at some length which the Press could not otherwise have reported, because they had appeared only in the evidence. Another call for Union watchfulness came in 1930 when amendment was required in the Act of 1908 governing the admission of the Press to meetings of local authorities, which in fact was originally drafted by Union officers. The new law was necessary because of changes in local government, including the abolition of the boards of guardians.

It is important for journalism as a whole to draw the proper deductions from the debates in Parliament on all these matters. Tributes to the immaculate conduct of the majority of journalists as guardians of public morals always draw a few sympathetic "hear hears," and offerings at the shrine of the Freedom of the Press are acclaimed, but attacks on papers that wallow for their own profit in the sordid, sensational and salacious, invariably gain emphatic support. The moral for newspaper controllers is obvious. One or two other events in the legislative category call for notice. The chief of these has to do with a principle which unites all who believe in a free Press as a cardinal component of public policy. It is the misuse of the Official Secrets Acts for prosecutions for offences never intended by Parliament to come within the scope of those Acts. Section 2 of the 1911 Act makes it an offence for any person to disclose without authorisation any information to which he had had access by reason of his position as a person holding office under the King. Such information need not be confidential. As Mr. Norman Birkett, K.C. (now Mr. Justice Birkett) pointed out at a Birmingham meeting of protest organised by the Union, large numbers of journalists, M.P.'s, civil servants, policemen and others were committing offences against this section every day of their lives, since information was being given daily which was not confidential but had not received express authorisation. Agitation was directed mainly against Section 6 of the Act of 1920, which made it the duty of every person to give to a police officer on demand any information in his power relating to an offence under the Act of 1911.

Only a few cases of action under these powers occurred, but they were significant and revealed dangers to the Press in the performance of their normal duties. In 1930 there was quite a

furore in Fleet Street owing to the action of Scotland Yard in paying a domiciliary visit to a journalist and severely examining him regarding the source of a published statement that the Government of India was preparing to arrest Gandhi. The N.P.A. protested that the journalist had engaged in the collection of news by legitimate methods and that the police action was an infraction of the freedom of the Press; and they called for the amendment of the 1920 Act so far as it related to civil affairs. Headlines on the reports of the incident indicated how seriously the danger was regarded—"Serious abuse of powers" (*Daily Telegraph*); "Downing Street's Ogpu—Third Degree methods" (*Morning Post*). Lord Riddell, lawyer as well as journalist, explained that the police could arrest without warrant, and, on mere suspicion of a minor offence, could enter the office of *The Times*, question and search the staff and seize and examine the archives. An amusing sequel was the story that the leakage of the news about Gandhi was traced to a Cabinet Minister.

The Government, however, took no action, and it was not until nearly ten years later that an amelioration was conceded. This came as the result of a wide and determined campaign started by the Union and conducted with the co-operation of the National Council for Civil Liberties. Such was the feeling aroused that open-air demonstrations were organised by branches and members carried banners in street processions. The immediate occasion of this great effort was the fining of a Manchester journalist (a member of the Union) for failing to give on demand "information in his possession relating to a suspected offence under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act, 1911," contrary to Section 6 of the Act of 1920. The *Daily Dispatch* published an article headed "Frauds on workers alleged; warrant for man with scar." The police asserted that the article contained almost an exact reproduction of a confidential police document which had been circulated, and there was reason to suppose that some police officer had communicated it to a pressman. Under strong protest the managing editor gave the police the name of the writer of the story (E. D. G. Lewis, the defendant), but Lewis refused to reveal to the police the source of his information. His counsel told the magistrates that Lewis obeyed a principle which governed the practice of his profession, and which was expressed in his Union's Code of Conduct—"A journalist . . . should keep Union and professional secrets and respect all necessary confidences regarding the source of his information and private documents."

A fine of £5 was imposed and notice of appeal given.

The vital issue from the journalistic standpoint, whether this was a case properly within the ambit of the Official Secrets Acts, was lost in the legal labyrinth, and the only question which the King's Bench judges had to decide was whether a policeman was a " person holding office under His Majesty," within Section 2 of the 1911 Act! They held that he was, so Lewis went without satisfaction from the Courts. The Union Executive declared that he had acted in accordance with the Code and praised his plucky stand. For a time he was the modest hero of the A.D.M. and conferences. The case for the journalist whose livelihood is news was put with striking force at special representative conferences in London, Manchester and Birmingham. The main plank was that Parliament never intended that these Acts should be used in cases other than those of national security. When the 1920 Act was passed the Attorney General (then Sir Gordon Hewart) said it was astonishing that journalists should think the measure dealt with them. Quite categorically he stated that in clause 6 they were dealing with spying and attempts at spying. In 1939 an amending Act was passed restricting the power of interrogation under that section to offences or suspected offences of espionage. This did not clear up the doubts about Section 2 of the 1911 Act, but the campaigners had the satisfaction of a solid reward.

Many other instances could be mentioned, if there were space, of Union intervention in the legislative arena, showing a full realisation of J. P. Curran's well-worn aphorism, " Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." When the Incitement to Disaffection Bill came along we got into touch with the Attorney General and tried to show how journalists might be unfairly affected. In 1934 the Institute took the field with a scheme for a State Register for Journalists. It had a certain subtle but superficial attraction for " moderates " in the Union, but when the question came to be fully argued there was practically unbroken opposition to it in Union ranks. The Institute got to the stage of an actual bill, entitled the Journalists Registration Bill. It is impossible here to give details of the scheme, or of the criticisms which apparently knocked the life out of it. Little has been heard of it since it was drafted. Its source was suspect, for the Institute never disguised its hostility to real trade unionism for journalists, though technically claiming to be a trade union itself. If the object was to keep " journalism for journalists " the Union thought

it had found a better way in its own organisation for that purpose than this elaborate and dubious scheme. The professed aim was to "raise journalism to the status of a recognised profession"—like the doctors and lawyers. The cold fact is that journalism cannot be made a close preserve like medicine and the law, by its very nature, for while the other professional men are practitioners on their own account journalists are employees. The Union felt convinced of its ability through its own policies on education, standards of conduct and the protection of the interests of working journalists, to achieve the desired uplift. But these policies require resolution in their development.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WORLD WAR 1939——?

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

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Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.
"*Locksley Hall*," (*Tennyson*, 1877).

It is now high summer in the year 1943 and the world is engaged in a vast and deadly conflict of which no cautious observer yet dares to predict the period. The story of how the Union fared in the Great War of 1914-1918 is a completed chapter of history, but the present story, with the World War being fought to its climax, must needs be incomplete. In the haze of uncertainty now existing my only course as an annalist is to tell what has happened to date. Since the start of the War in 1939 there have been four Annual Delegate Meetings, and this record will close at the fourth, held last Easter. It must be brief and the full tale must remain to be told in future years. As in the Great War so in this—the Union was soon involved in controversies inseparable from the ordeal of battle. A free Press in a free country was subjected to the restriction of its freedom in a fight for the freedom of man. In the preceding 25 years the Union had grown in stature and improved its organisation. Thus it was better equipped to defend the interest of its members. One notable example of this has been the recognition of our chapels in the agreements made

about the variation of conditions of work. The Union to-day has a stronger voice in all these questions of emergency arrangements, and we may be confident that that voice will be effectively heard in the difficult times ahead.

In June, 1940, the National Executive Council "found it necessary to define the position of the Union in relation to the national crisis, in order to correct any wrong impressions which might have been created by propaganda in the N.U.J. by organised political groups who were quite unrepresentative of the mass of the membership." Accordingly the following resolution was approved by 25 members and opposed by four; "The N.E.C. of the N.U.J. welcomes the formation of a National Government in which the Trade Union movement is strongly represented, and pledges itself in the present grave national crisis to give the Government every possible support and co-operation until Hitlerism is defeated." At the A.D.M. ensuing the unusual demand for the names of the minority was made, and, although it is against my practice, I put the answer on record because of the crucial position in which the names were revealed. The minority were S. M. Chisholm, G. Coulter, R. J. Finnemore and H. Myers. Some totals of finance and membership for the War years will give a bird's-eye view of the Union's reaction to a heavy strain:

MEMBERSHIP.

End of 1939, total, 7355; Forces and Civil Defence, 394.
1940, total, 7,095; Forces and Civil Defence, 1,755.
1941, total, 7,199; Forces and Civil Defence, 2,376; in non-journalistic employment, 155.
1942, total, 7,432 (including 247 wartime members, or "dilutees"); Forces and Civil Defence, 2,746; non-journalistic employment, 145.

FINANCE.

1939, net deficit, £3,938.
1940, net deficit, £1,602.
1941, surplus of income over expenditure, £5,754 (decrease in benefit payments, £8,109).
1942, surplus income over expenditure, £6,653.
The causes of the deficits were the initial heavy unemployment, and afterwards the excusal of payment of contributions by those in the Forces.

In January, 1939, the Union sent out a statement of objectives, not intended for immediate presentation to the proprietors, but as improvements to be sought when circumstances made them possible. The "circumstance" of war before the year ended left them in that nebulous condition, just as the war of 1914 imposed estoppel on the first National Programme. The main objectives were—increased provincial minima, ranging from £5,

at the lowest, for weeklies, to £7 10s. 0d. for dailies in the larger towns; London minimum of £9 9s. 0d. for London offices of provincial papers; limitation of hours; fixed holidays with pay; better linage rates; and in London, the £9 9s. 0d. minimum for all dailies and national weeklies (including financial and sporting papers) and for agencies, two guineas a day for spacemen, these not to number morethan 10 per cent. of the staff. During that year the threat of war overshadowed the country and before the fateful decision came it became apparent that the Union would have to face wholesale dismissals from newspaper staffs. The P. & K.T.F., which was to display great vigilance and efficiency in the war years, rapidly secured temporary agreements with the employers to regulate emergency conditions. It was provided that to avoid dismissals there should be "a readiness in each establishment to come to a mutual understanding as to the working of emergency short time," with the important safeguard that all such arrangements should be subject to mutual agreement between the employer and the chapel concerned. In most offices the chapels consented to the operation of short-time schemes and thus saved hundreds of members from dismissal. This meant considerable sacrifice to many, and was a fine exhibition of the true spirit of trade unionism. Incidentally the Union was saved from a financial crisis. The temporary nature of the agreements was well understood; there was no surrender of Union gains or rights.

The 1940 A.D.M. called for an agreed policy with other unions to maintain wage values in view of the rising cost of living. Then the P. & K.T.F. asked for a war bonus of 10s. for adult workers (including women in receipt of men's rates), 7s. 6d. for other women and 4s. for juveniles. The National Arbitration Tribunal awarded respectively 5s., 2s. 6d. and 1s. 6d. The event was described by Mr. George Isaacs, M.P., president of the Federation, who conducted its case with remarkable ability, as a "double first," it being the first case to be heard by the Tribunal, and the first time that the printing trades had ever come before such a tribunal. The question soon arose as to whether the increase was payable to workers already receiving 5s. or more above the minimum. The Unions contended that it was so payable and employers' organisations agreed, but some employers failed to pay it. The Joint Council advised that the increase was due on all wages, including "merit money," if any. The issue was decided by the Tribunal itself, on an application by the *Yorkshire Post*. The

ruling was that the increase was on the agreed rates (minimum) only. Some employers held to this, but in the main the increase was paid irrespective of merit money. The award was naturally not received with enthusiasm by journalists, accustomed to the higher standards won for them by the Union, but it was noted that any substantial rises were not to be expected in view of the Government policy of wages stabilisation to avoid inflation, and also of the Federation's aim to win something for the lower grades.

Another wage advance came in 1941, by agreement and not by arbitration. "War Agreement No. 6" on the Federation's file, dated August, 1941, gave a further 5s. to men and women on men's rates, 3s. 6d. to other women and 2s. to juveniles. It was made clear that the advance was on the whole wage, including merit money, though it was recognised that the employer could get the amount he was paying above the minimum reduced by giving notice to the employee and re-engaging him. As there were workers in the printing industry still receiving less than £3 per week, the Federation tried to secure a graded scale giving the highest increase on the lowest wage, but the employers would only consider an all-round increase. The London papers publishing in Manchester and Glasgow, though not parties to the award and agreement, said they would pay a similar bonus to those whose basic wages did not exceed £8 8s. a week. For a time the N.P.A. politely refused to recognise the Unions' case, but towards the end of 1941 they offered a war bonus of 7s. 6d. to all members of unions (other than "executives") with a basic wage of not more than £10 10s. a week. Women journalists on full rates were included in this and other women had 5s., and juniors 3s. 6d. Fruitless efforts were made by the Union to get an agreement with the London Newspapers Provincial Association, a new body representing the London interests in the provinces. The aim was to get an agreement giving London terms to the staffs in Manchester working for the London papers, who were outside both London and provincial agreements. The Association declined to meet the Union. They had obtained a ruling by the Arbitration Tribunal that they were not subject to the award. The Union maintained its efforts and informed the P. & K.T.F. of the unusual attitude of the L.N.P.A. Manchester was very dissatisfied with the position, and as events developed there was much disputation between that branch and the N.E.C. The offer by the Association, referred to above, was not acceptable. In January, 1942, the L.N.P.A. did meet the Union and rejected its request for an

agreement embodying the £9 9s. minimum and a five-day week. (Foster stoutly holds that N.P.A. agreements cover the Manchester offices of London National papers). By the good offices of the P. & K.T.F. another meeting was held in June following, when the employers offered a £7 7s. minimum and an 11 day fortnight, based, it was said, on the generally accepted standard for Manchester. To accept this would place the men concerned on a lower footing than that enjoyed by the majority in the offices of the Association. The staffs in Manchester affected recommended the chapels involved not to enter into any negotiations for varying conditions until the Association made an agreement with the Union. This was endorsed by the Executive. On questions of general policy, although Manchester maintains the critical attitude which is its right, and the Executive the posture of authority which is its prerogative, relations are not always strained. For instance in the autumn of 1941, when the Union Chapel at Allied Newspapers, Manchester, found that the firm had had a good year, it suggested that the sacrifices made earlier by the editorial staffs should be recognised. The directors replied that they would refund the amounts deducted from wages by mutual agreement from October, 1939, to May, 1940. The N.E.C. congratulated both chapel and management, but very properly reminded Chapels that before taking similar action they must inform the Executive. so that "spasmodic movements" should be coordinated with "high policy."

In some quarters of the Union the view was expressed that by the policies followed by the P. & K.T.F. they were not getting all they were entitled to expect, and there was talk of independent action. This was particularly the feeling in Manchester, and that branch, with the object of "giving the Federation a lead," as one delegate expressed it, moved at the 1942 A.D.M. "that in view of the increased profits of newspapers, the N.U.J. makes application for an increase of wages of £1 1s. per week, and asks the P. & K.T.F. for support." Most of the Executive thought the proposal impracticable, and favoured the policy of marching loyally in step with the Federation. Had the Union a right, it was asked, to go to the Tribunal with a demand and to pretend that it was acting as a loyal member of the Federation ? Bundock frankly said that if they went to the Federation with this demand for a guinea they would not be taken seriously, and if they went to arbitration what hope was there, national policy being what it was ? Despite all, the delegates voted, 88 against 27, for the

Manchester motion. The branch had been consistent, for at the end of 1941 it announced that it did not consider itself bound by the agreement giving the war bonus of 5s., and asked the N.E.C. to put forward independently any future wage or bonus claim by the N.U.J.

Although it was contrary to its own judgment the N.E.C. obeyed the A.D.M. resolution and conveyed the decision to the P. & K.T.F., the Secretary of which, speaking for his executive, pointed out the difficulties being experienced in other wage movements then proceeding, and asked if the N.U.J. was satisfied that a request of the dimensions proposed might be expected to succeed ? The prerogative of each union to proceed with its own wage claims was admitted, but as the support of the Federation was asked it was felt that the Federation's comments were also invited. The N.E.C., however, after anxious discussion decided to present the demand for the guinea advance. The employers rejected it, as the N.E.C. feared. But by this time the Newspaper Society had conceded a grading scheme to other unions. This movement had been watched by the N.E.C. and when our negotiators met the N.S. in September, 1942, they seized the opportunity and found, as one employer said, "A better spirit abroad." The result was a new agreement which raised wage scales to much better figures. As showing the progress achieved it should be remembered that the lowest Union minimum fixed in the agreement with the N.S. in 1921 was £4 7s. 6d. per week. The two war increases raised this to £4 17s. 6d., at which figure it stood when the new approach was made. The substantial benefits now obtained will be seen from the following details extracted from the agreement, which covers the provinces, but not the weekly papers in Scotland, where the proprietors are separately organised and are, at the time of writing, being approached by the Union :

Minimum rates for members of the N.U.J. irrespective of sex who have attained the age of 24 and who have earned their living as journalists on morning, evening or weekly newspapers for four years :

	Increase	New Minimum Rate
	s. d.	£ s. d.
Weekly Papers	6 0	5 3 6
Weekly Papers in places where daily papers are published	6 6	5 10 0
Daily Papers published in towns of under 100,000 inhabitants	7 0	6 0 0
Daily Papers published in towns of between 100,000 and 250,000 inhabitants	10 0	6 8 6
Daily Papers in towns of over 250,000 inhabitants	10 0	6 15 0

Minimum rates for junior journalists as increased by percentage of the increases provided above:

New Adult Rates:	Aged 20	Aged 21	Aged 22	Aged 23
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
5 3 6	2 10 0	2 19 6	3 13 6	4 3 0
5 10 0	2 14 0	3 3 6	3 18 6	4 8 6
6 0 0	2 18 6	3 10 0	4 6 6	4 17 0
6 8 6	3 3 0	3 14 6	4 12 6	5 4 0
6 15 0	3 6 0	3 18 6	4 17 6	5 9 6

Minimum rates for members of the N.U.J. employed in London offices of Provincial morning and evening newspapers:

Adults:	Increase	New Minimum Rate
	s. d.	£ s. d.
First year's service in London	10 0	8 7 0
Second year's service in London	10 0	8 17 6
Third year's service in London	10 0	9 8 0
Juniors (for 3 years, or last 3 years, of training):—		
Ante-penultimate year	6 0	3 12 6
Penultimate year	7 6	4 15 0
Last year	8 6	6 18 0

Having secured a "rock-bottom" minimum for weekly papers in the lowest grade of £5 3s. 6d. a week all the delegates at the 1943 A.D.M., except the ginger groups, listened with satisfaction to the tribute paid to the Union by Mr. W. C. Warren, fraternal delegate from the P. & K.T.F., who congratulated the N.E.C. on "successfully negotiating the best wage settlement that any of the individual unions of the Federation had obtained during the war period." There were, however, some classes of members with grievances—the linage correspondents and free lances. Improved scales of pay were formulated and members were recommended to charge them. The Conference also resolved to work for agreements to cover sections of the membership not yet enjoying such protection, notably the large Trade and Periodical Branch, the staffs of London papers in Manchester, and the whole of Scotland. Some existing agreements needed revision in the interests of Agency staffs in London and the financial and sporting papers there, which were still under the handicap of the differential minimum compared with the general dailies, which the Union had not been able over many years to correct. Ireland has yet to come into the picture of Union achievement; a move is now being made to establish the position in Northern Ireland. One more event has to be noted to complete the War wage record to date. In June this year (1943) the P. & K.T.F. made an application for an increase in the wages of all adult workers employed by the British Federation of Master Printers and the Newspaper Society, of £1 per week. A similar

claim was sent to the London Newspapers Provincial Asociation for Union members employed by their constituents. The issue went to Arbitration and the Tribunal decided (with regard to the B.F.M.P. and the N.S.) against the claim for men and women on men's work, but awarded an advance of 4s. per week in the minimum for other women. No advance was awarded to any L.N.P.A. workers. The comment cannot be resisted that those who favoured the Union demand for a guinea increase a year before were entitled to a little chuckle over this development in Federation policy, but of course a year is a long period in war and developments are quick and dramatic. On the other hand those who opposed the demand for the guinea held that if the joint claim had been more moderate something might have been gained, whereas in fact the £1 advance was immediately resisted by the employers and was rejected by the Tribunal. The Federation chose the homely pound rather than the professional guinea. This reminds me of the negotiations with the N.P.A. over 20 years ago, when the question of pounds or guineas was mentioned. I remember appealing for the guinea, not entirely from any sense of professional dignity, for the difference between £9 and £9 9s. was something fairly solid. Of course the guinea was the professional standard in the Fleet Street tradition.

A special class of membership was introduced in 1941 for wartime dilutees and probationers, for a limited period. Many were in doubt for a time whether there would be a scarcity of journalistic labour, due to the raising of the age of editorial reservation and the substitution of individual deferment for group reservation in regard to national service; or a surplus of labour, due to a process of telescoping papers which at one period was threatened. As things developed it was found desirable to make specific provision for those who were coming into journalism from other occupations. This meant an arduous piece of work by the Administrative Committee, which, under Foster's driving, sat until 3 a.m. one Sunday. The scheme was a triumph of Didymus's genius for drafting.

A dilutee was defined in the new rule as "a wartime entrant into journalism who has not been previously a member of the Union and who has had less than three years' experience of editorial work on a daily or weekly newspaper or agency staff or on the editorial staff of a publication of the class issued by members of the Trade Paper, Periodical and Weekly Newspaper Proprietors' Association." These members are [illegible]

N.A.L.A. D.P.R. ACC. No.

per month, but not levies or death benefit contribution, and are entitled to unemployment benefit of £1 per week for 13 weeks after paying three years' contributions. They also share in dispute benefit. They can attend and speak at branch meetings, but can only vote at Chapel meetings. When the benefit provided has been paid, or if the dilutee enters another occupation, his membership ceases. The date after cessation of hostilities when dilutees remaining, or likely to remain, in journalism shall be eligible for ordinary membership of the Union, will be determined by the A.D.M. Dilutees who have not qualified for the unemployment benefit on becoming unemployed are entitled to receive half the contributions they have paid in. Branches are urged by the N.E.C. to keep a register of all entrants in this special class, and to ensure as far as possible that their letters of engagement specify that the appointment is temporary. The policy behind the offer of a special benefit to dilutees was the maintenance of the closed shop where it exists, and the achievement of it where it does not. It may be noted here that editorial staffs were included in the list of reserved occupations from the beginning, the age limit of exemption at first being 30 for editors, assistant editors, sub-editors, including caption writers, special writers, reporters and librarians, on the staffs of newspapers, periodicals, and news agencies. The age of exemption soon rose to 35 and then one year was added each month, while the group system of reservation was superseded by the method of individual deferment of calling-up.

The probability of war was before the Executive all through 1939, and the spectre of the Censor soon appeared. A Special War Committee was appointed just after Munich, but it proved very difficult to discover the mind of the Government on the position and lot of the Press if war came. An Advisory Council was given the job of preparing a Central Register of persons with professional and technical qualifications whose services might be needed. In spite of this, when the Ministry of Information was formed, many appointments were made of persons inexperienced in the work to be done, and no use was made of the Register in the compilation of which the Union had co-operated. The result was deep dissatisfaction with the work of the Ministry and the Union set itself to the task of reform. The lead was taken by Ernest E. Hunter, vice-president of the Union, whose journalistic work was at the headquarters of the Ministry at Bloomsbury. A thorough overhaul of the Ministry followed,

with the assurance that future appointments to journalistic posts would be made with reference to the Central Register. As a member of the Central Register (Journalists) Committee and as chairman of the Press Committee of the Ministry, Hunter was in a key position and did invaluable work. Critics spoke of the "mess and muddle" at the Ministry as a "national scandal and danger." It was felt to be intolerable that journalists were being side-tracked and amateurs and incompetents placed in posts which needed journalistic skill. Moreover there were over 250 members of the Union on the unemployment register. Another sore point was the bungling, or worse, in the staffing of the regional stations which were the provincial outposts of the Ministry, and charges of nepotism and favouritism were levelled in some cases. In the reform of all this the Union played a prominent, and in some directions a decisive, part. Ley, in his presidential address at the 1940 A.D.M. spoke with scorn of the "Tadpoles and Barnacles of Whitehall" who had had their fingers in the Bloomsbury pie.

One big grievance at the 1941 A.D.M. was the way in which the censorship was working. Hunter told some good stories of its absurdities, which almost equalled those that gave a little light relief to the tragedy of the Great War, 1914-18. I am tied to the affairs of the Union, so those stories must be found elsewhere. A fair point was made by the Union in its claim that working journalists in daily touch with every aspect of news, censorship and propaganda, should be called into consultation, whereas in fact such assistance was sought only from proprietorial representatives. For a long time some obtuse minds at the Ministry failed to realise the need of proper journalistic representation on the Regional Advisory Committees. By 1942 experience had taught some lessons and an official direction was given to regional officers on the importance of having working journalists on those bodies. Through the Register, too, nearly 300 members of the Union had been appointed as Public Relations Officers or allocated to work in connection with various Ministries. Other questions which the Executive had to take up were the release of news to the B.B.C. before the Press, the with-holding from local journalists of information about the arrival of distinguished persons in their towns, attempted censorship by local officials other than officers of the Ministry, and the obstruction of journalists in the pursuit of their legitimate business. There were some glaring instances of this interference in Scotland,

at Liverpool and elsewhere, and the N.E.C. and the General Secretary did the best they could in the confusion of authorities, central, local and Service.

Although a Minister had declared the Government's desire "to preserve in all essentials a free Parliament and a free Press," perpetual watch had to be kept. When the abortive Duff Cooper plan for compulsory censorship was discussed the T. & P. Branch sent a circular to all branches attacking the Executive for "refusing to express its unqualified opposition." Bundock had no difficulty in disposing of this charge. The N.E.C. had been fully alive to the danger and had expressed its policy, not perhaps in the slashing invective of the T. & P. Branch, but in the language of responsibility. Bundock said that the Union must not accept the resolutions of that branch as the views of the bulk of its members, for the branch "had been captured by a small organised political group which uses it for its political purposes." The membership was, of course, to blame for leaving affairs to "this small and clamorous minority," and yet expressing their disgust at the political proclivities of the branch. Other branches, notably Central London, faced the same danger, and this was the early rumbling of a storm that was to cause much disturbance, and culminate in a first-class "crisis" on the "rights of minorities." For any part they may have played, with others, in these matters, the small Communist elements here and there in the Union have not escaped criticism. Bundock protested on one occasion that the Communists should pursue their Communism through the proper channels and not use the Union for organised propaganda. Then all in the Union could pull together for the welfare of the journalist as such, which was the proper work of the Union. Communists *qua* journalists had their proper function in the Union, but the Secretary was anxious that they should not be political agitators in the Union sphere. A conference attended by 1,000 delegates was held in London in June, 1941, jointly organised by the Union and the National Council for Civil Liberties, to which it was affiliated, to assert the right to the free expression of opinion and the maintenance of free criticism. A year before a similar conference had been held, at which Ernest Hunter made a striking declaration on the battle for the liberty of the Press. but at this 1941 conference Hunter declined to attend and speak. Foster and Bundock, on the joint committee with the N.C.C.L., did their best to keep the agenda, the speakers, and the literature distribution, free from

party bias, and the Conference from becoming only a Communist propaganda meeting. The Conference called for the repeal of certain Defence Regulations, with retrospective effect, deplored the attitude of Service Departments, and asked for the improved release of news.

The chief attack was on Regulation 2D, under which the Communist *Daily Worker* had been summarily suppressed for its anti-war activities. This was, of course, before the Soviet became our ally and later abolished the Comintern. The Regulation 2D for the "control of newspapers" gives the Secretary of State power to stop the publication of any newspaper which systematically publishes matter which, in his opinion, is calculated to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war to a successful issue. The order of suppression also prohibits the publication of any newspaper under any name which is a continuation of, or in substitution for, the newspaper named in the order. Regulation 94B gives power to confiscate printing presses, unless leave for their use has been obtained from the High Court. Under Regulation 2C there is power to prosecute, after warning, the publishers of matter (newspapers not named) calculated to foment opposition to the war. Publication may be oral or otherwise. The maximum penalty is seven years penal servitude or a fine of £500, or both. It is a proviso that it shall be a defence to prove that the accused had no intent, and no reasonable cause to believe that the publication was calculated, to foment opposition. The feeling of many was that newspapers should be given a trial under 2C, and not suppressed under 2D. Foster, who was President in 1941-42, expressed his reasoned belief in the need of 2D for prompt Government action in times of dire peril. The *Daily Worker* deserved to be suppressed; the one principle for which he would not fight was liberty to destroy the men who were fighting for our liberties. But, he pleaded, the suppression should not be vindictively prolonged "after a change of heart."

The *Daily Mirror*, which was admittedly not defeatist, had been warned on the score of its criticisms, and Foster urged that the Government should be less resentful of criticism and journalists true to journalism's highest traditions. Foster a year previously had enlarged (to the extent of seven columns in the *Journalist*) on this theme in a courageous article headed "All we have of freedom: an old journalist on responsibility and respect for the law in time of peril." When the country was in danger of invasion, and the spiritual foundations of human life were in peril, no action

was too prompt or imperative. They contemplated with some misgiving 2D, but he pointed out that the *Daily Worker* had been warned. (Such warning is not required by 2D). To the objection that the Home Secretary became both accuser and judge in his own court Foster replied that administrative law was vitally necessary, and scandalously grave propaganda must be stopped immediately at all costs. That was the mission of 2D. The assurance had been given that all these emergency measures and new offences would vanish with the advent of victory and peace, and with that we could be content to wait. If those pledges were broken the remedy would be in the hands of an awakened and embittered electorate.

A danger to freedom was discerned in March, 1942, in a proposal to establish some body representative of the newspaper profession, including newspaper proprietors and the two organisations of journalists, for the purpose of ensuring "the maintenance of a proper sense of responsibility in the Press, and control of irresponsible newspapers and journalists." The A.D.M. emphatically opposed this, being of opinion that such a body could easily become a "most dangerous agency for the suppression of legitimate criticism, and must inevitably lead to a still further invasion of the freedom of the Press." A composite resolution of the A.D.M., referring first to the warning to the *Daily Mirror*, stated that interference with the Press was an acknowledged contributory cause to the collapse of France; condemned the arbitrary suppression of a paper without trial under Regulation 2D, which was only meant for use when there was dire peril from invasion; and commented that it would be playing Hitler's game if heed were paid to suggestions in favour of the "telescoping" of papers or the compulsory merging of one paper with another, because variety of opinion and right of expression were the lifeblood of democracy. The Home Secretary met a Union deputation on the question of the suggested newspaper disciplinary body, and explained that the Government had no intention of parting with any of its powers of control to any *ad hoc* body. He said that he stated in the House, in reply to a question, that the Government would sympathetically consider such a proposal coming from newspaper interests themselves, if they were agreed. He fully accepted the position that the N.U.J. felt the proposal was unsound and unworkable, and had no intention of pressing it.

Paper shortage and other restrictions caused the closing down in 1940 of 82 trade and periodical publications and 12 weekly

newspapers, and the merging of two pairs of weekly papers and 16 pairs of trade papers; in 1941, 12 periodicals closed down, 15 weekly journals became fortnightlies, five papers changed to less frequent publishing dates, six pairs of periodicals and five pairs of weekly papers merged; and in 1942 one trade paper suspended publication, two English and two Scottish weeklies merged, while one new wartime weekly appeared. Notable among changes were the merging of the *Yorkshire Post* and *Leeds Mercury*, and the suspension "for the duration" of the evening paper, the *Reading Gazette*. The Central News discontinued its news services for the period of the war, but retained its Parliamentary services.

One of the keenest controversies in the history of the Union developed in 1942 and reached the proportions of a "constitutional" problem which had to be settled at the 1943 A.D.M. Trouble had been arising in the N.E.C., for some time past, owing to the unwillingness of a small but very alert minority to accept defeat in the Council, and their insistence on their right to carry their contentions to the A.D.M. in opposition to the Council majority, however large. This practice reached its height at the 1942 A.D.M., when the Executive policy on the vexed question of the status of the Union in Eire, and the future of the Dublin branch, suffered a reverse. The merits of the Irish issues need not be discussed here. Suffice it to say that five members of the Executive who had fought the majority policy took the floor of the A.D.M. and opposed the recommendations of the N.E.C., contending for the right of the defeated minority so to do. This disunity among the Executive in face of the delegates was an humiliating experience, and an indignant majority had to listen to some caustic criticism. Things went along with normal outward smoothness until, in the September *Journalist*, came the startling news that Don Elliot, who had been elected President at Easter, had resigned that office. This was an unprecedented event, the brief explanation of which is found in the minutes of the Executive of August 28. It is not surprising that soon after the 1942 A.D.M. the N.E.C. set about framing Standing Orders to regularise their proceedings and prevent the repetition of the deplorable display of disunity at that conference. The minute reads:

N.E.C. CONDUCT:
Mr. Hunter moved and Mr. Jay seconded the following motion: "When a decision has been made by the N.E.C. it shall be an obligation on all members to uphold it until it has been rescinded or until it has been

set aside by a delegate meeting. Members of the Council, when speaking at any conference or meeting where they are in attendance by virtue of their membership of the N.E.C., shall not speak or vote contrary to the decisions of the N.E.C."

The President moved and Mr. Irvin seconded the following amendment: "In accordance with the custom of recent years, members who disagree in principle with a decision of the majority of the Executive and who wish to reserve the rights to express their viewpoint at branch meetings or at the A.D.M. shall intimate their intention following the vote, or, if absent from the meeting, on receipt of the minutes."

After a full debate the amendment was lost, the voting being: for, 5; against, 16.

A further amendment was moved by Mr. Schaffer and seconded by Mr. Aldous: "A member having disagreement on principle with a majority decision may notify such disagreement at the time the vote is taken or, if absent at the time, on receipt of the minutes. When speaking at any public conference or public meeting by virtue of membership of the N.E.C. he shall not speak contrary to the decisions of the N.E.C. At the A.D.M. a member holding a minority view may speak with the permission of the conference, but where more than one member holds a minority view a spokesman for the minority shall be selected."

The amendment was lost, the voting being: for, 9; against, 12.

Mr. Nichols moved, Mr. Treavett seconded, a further amendment to insert the words "other than a meeting of a Branch or District Council" after the words "conference or meeting." The amendment was accepted and the motion thus amended was carried by 17 votes to 5.

It was requested and agreed that the vote should be recorded. Members voting for the motion: Messrs. Nichols, Ley, Didymus, Raybould, Hunter, Bill, Grunwell, Moxley, Gibson, Kenyon, Hathway, Copplestone, Marshall, Treavett, Jay, Dickinson and Foster. Members voting against: Messrs. Fox, Aldous, Schaffer, Finnemore, and Irvin.

Mr. Elliot intimated that he was unable to carry on as President, in view of the implications of this resolution, and tendered his resignation. The meeting then adjourned. On resuming on August 29, Mr. A. Kenyon (Vice-President) presided.

Elliot gave his reasons for resigning in the *Journalist* of October, contending that it was folly to "stifle minority views." It had been the practice since 1927, he said, for members of the N.E.C. who differed on principle from decisions, to have the right to express their views freely, on giving intimation of such intention. To "muzzle" them deprived the Union of the benefit of their judgment. At the 1942 A.D.M. the facts and arguments put forward by the minority men, he declared, gave the delegates new light on the Irish problem, and the minority became the majority. Elliot and W. Irvin, the two representatives of Scotland on the N.E.C., resigned from that body, but as the situation cleared later they both returned. In Scotland the heather was now ablaze, and there was an equal rise in temperature in England, though the Sassenach has no such picturesque phrase to describe it. Branches were busy passing resolutions, some for and some against the Executive. The N.E.C. issued a statement entitled "The Union's Choice," to correct "misrepresentations and misunderstandings." The Council had found it necessary to

impose upon itself a collective democratic discipline, owing to the practice of a small section of its members of opposing majority decisions. " This attitude has caused uncertainty in the minds of members as to our national policy, and if persisted in would prevent the Union carrying out its functions in an ordered democratic manner." A special meeting of the N.E.C. had reaffirmed the decision of August 28 by 15 votes to one. As to tradition the dissidents had departed from it by turning what was a rare privilege into an habitual abuse. The effect had been to discredit the N.E.C. as a whole, through the impression conveyed of dissension, confusion and weakness. If the Executive acted wrongly in the opinion of members the A.D.M. could reverse their policy and replace the N.E.C. members responsible.

Manchester branch sent to all branches its demand for the suspension of the " ban " pending consideration by the next A.D.M. The action of the N.E.C. was unconstitutional and this attempt at " the mental manacling of minorities " must be repudiated. Birmingham branch, " in view of the obvious attempt by Manchester to usurp the functions of A.D.M.," took up the challenge and appealed to members at large to keep to the real matter at issue—" what constitutes the best principles for maintaining ordered government by the Cabinet of the Union." Edinburgh regretted Elliot's resignation, and asked that the resolution which caused it should be rescinded and the decision of the A.D.M. awaited. There was a friendly reference to the late President in the N.E.C. statement: "We desire to pay tribute to the work our good friend Don Elliot has done for the Union, especially in Scotland, but we maintain that his insistence on the right of the individual to flout the majority is a denial of his belief in collective action through the Union." Elliot himself protested direct to the branches against the assertion by the N.E.C. that he and a small number of N.E.C. members " by their actions outside the Council have sought to set aside the democratic practice of majority rule." This was an unfortunate personal embitterment of the controversy which was eventually removed by a clarification of meaning in the N.E.C. Space forbids any attempt to record the arguments pro and con, which, said the Editor, would have completely filled the *Journalist*.

There were no fewer than 15 notices of motion on " N.E.C. Conduct " for the 1943 A.D.M., over which Kenyon, the Acting-President, presided in the self-styled role of the Orphan of the Storm. The spirit of goodwill, restraint and dignity happily

governed the occasion, and the keynote was sounded in the appeal from the chair to consider nothing but the welfare of the Union and the harmony of their fellowship within it. J. H. Aitken opened the debate by moving for Glasgow that the N.E.C. exceeded its powers in passing its resolution of August 28, 1942, and that it be instructed to rescind it. In a speech which set the right tone for the debate, he said the N.E.C. had blundered badly in suggesting a cure which was worse than the disease. The N.E.C. was not a Cabinet, chosen by a party leader, but a body elected by their own fellows. Each member was entitled by rule to attend the A.D.M. and vote, which meant the right to justify the vote and to endeavour to persuade others in the exercise of their vote. He agreed that the minority must accept majority decisions, but the final court was not the N.E.C. but the A.D.M. Bundock ably put the case for the N.E.C. It was impossible, he said, to conduct the affairs of an organisation, which implied the bringing together of all points of view in a final decided policy, unless majority decisions were accepted. He smiled at the suggestion that the minority was muzzled. Anyone on the Executive would not believe it. But when an issue was fully discussed and decided, for the minority to say they would not accept the decision was intolerable. A compromise motion submitted by Central London and accepted by the N.E.C. was passed by the Conference, in the following terms:

The A.D.M. requires members of the N.E.C. to observe the obligations of democratic government, and to conform loyally to majority decisions until such times as they may be rescinded or varied. The N.E.C. has collective responsibility, and therefore its members should not speak in opposition to majority decisions in A.D.M., except as so provided hereafter.

The A.D.M. may by resolution call for the voting in the N.E.C. on any controversial matter, and may also decide by a majority vote to hear not more than two members representing a minority.

While not relinquishing the right possessed by all members to endeavour by the usual procedure of the Union (including that defined in Rule 2m)* to win acceptance for their views, members of the Executive, being charged with great responsibilities, are bound in a special degree by obligations to their colleagues on the N.E.C. and to all members of the Union, to ensure the smooth and efficient discharge of the Union's business and to promote its welfare.

This A.D.M. 'therefore calls on all members of the N.E.C. to promote harmony and unity in the Union by maintaining in their own proceedings a harmony and unity superior to all differences of opinion.

*[Rule 2m permits a member to speak at any branch to which he does not belong if the meeting so desires.]

The credit for drafting this compromise belonged to the recently formed chapel at *The Times*. J. V. Radcliffe, Father of the Chapel, moved its adoption at the Central London branch

meeting. Maurice Webb, the new national member of the Executive, in announcing that his branch (Parliamentary) was entirely behind the Executive, but would support the motion as an accommodation, added the quizzical comment that it read like a *Times* leader in the days of appeasement. A motion from Manchester " that no member of the N.E.C. shall have a vote at the A.D.M. except when acting in a dual capacity as a branch delegate," was carried. As the vote is conferred by rule there will have to be a resolution of the next A.D.M. amending the rule.

A weighty problem has been tackled despite war pre-occupations in the appointment of a Commission to examine the organisation of the Union in the London area. The initiative came from the N.E.C. at the 1942 A.D.M. There are approximately 3,000 members in the London region, of which the Central Branch has over 1,800. Hunter, who moved the resolution, emphasised the notorious fact that a small branch meeting, perhaps less than 60, wielded the card vote at the A.D.M. of that great membership. It was impossible as a matter of geography and the residence of members to get representative meetings of the branch. There was need for smaller units for a truer expression of Union opinion. Foster (President) said that apathy was not the only problem, for it was impossible to fix times for meetings at which a fair proportion of members could attend. His own solution is a branch in every large office, like the Guild in New York and several British trade unions. The Commission got to work in the summer and presented the following interim report to the 1943 A.D.M.:

The Commission appointed by the N.E.C. on the instruction of the A.D.M. to consider the organisation of the Union in London has met six times, and has thoroughly investigated the many aspects of the subject. It has received a number of statements from Branches, Chapels, and individual members in London. It has examined witnesses from our own organisation and from other Unions which have been good enough to give the Commission the value of their experience. It has completed this investigation, and is now engaged in considering the recommendations it will make. It is not in a position to present its conclusions for discussion at this A.D.M., and asks that this shall be regarded as a report of progress for the information of A.D.M. Its fully considered conclusions will be submitted next year.

In the meantime, the Commission, having ascertained the views of chapels and representative witnesses, is of opinion that the weight of evidence is in favour of the basis of the Central London membership being retained as at present. It will not, therefore, recommend any change in this connection. It finds that a case has also been made out for the continuance of the Parliamentary and the Law Courts Branches as independent entities. These decisions are without prejudice to any proposals that might be made in the future to set up a Branch or Branches to satisfy the special functions of any body or bodies of members.

Having reached these conclusions, however, the Commission feels it desirable to examine further the internal government of the Central London Branch. The task is a big one, and the Commission did not feel that it would be properly discharging it by hurrying its work in order to be able to report fully this year. Its recommendations will be submitted in good time for full and proper consideration by the next A.D.M.—H. A. RAYBOULD (Chairman); C. J. BUNDOCK (Secretary).

Reference has been made to the work of Ernest Hunter in the early stages of the war in securing justice for journalists at the Ministry of Information. His 1940 presidency of the Union will be memorable for that gallant fight. Ever since his childhood in the East End of London, where his father, a carman, had to bring up a family of seven on thirty shillings a week, he has been a fighter. A few sentences will picture the career of one who is a doughty combatant as a man of nearly sixty—a Peace Leaguer during the South African War, who was mobbed with Will Crooks and others in Victoria Park; in demand as a speaker in the early days of the Labour movement; a *Clarion* vanner and a champion of Socialism in the columns of *Justice*; went to gaol on refusing to pay a fine after a free speech fight at Sheffield; political agent for the Northumberland Miners' Association; secretary to Ramsay Macdonald and intimate of Labour leaders; in the Great War worked on behalf of conscientious objectors and for the No-Conscription Fellowship; on the fall of the first Labour Government in 1924 got his introduction to journalism under H. N. Brailsford on the *New Leader*; won his spurs in the Gallery and Lobby for the *Daily Herald*, did memorable work in the 1931 crisis and went to the Imperial Conference at Ottawa; the opening of the present war saw him doing a special job for the *Herald* at the Ministry of Information, which he has just left to return to Long Acre as personal assistant to the editor. In making a presentation to him on leaving, the Minister of Information (Mr. Brendan Bracken, M.P.) spoke highly of his three years' service and described him as an institution at the Ministry.

Amid the whirl of the World War R. J. Finnemore, the representative of Manchester on the N.E.C., has been fighting his own stubborn battle as one of the Union's militant leaders. Though fated often to be in the minority on the Executive, he has, after three defeats by card vote in the A.D.M., been elected to the vice-presidency and will, in the natural order, become the head of the Union in what must be a year of exceptional responsibility. It is probably true to say that his political views would be repudiated by the majority of members, but the Union has no

concern with outside party warfare, and Finnemore's Union record is that of a painstaking and devoted worker. He is strong in his grasp of Union business, comes into office in comparative youth, and is capable of high service in the paths of progress indicated by tradition and experience. Although at times he says bitter things he has a personality which wins those who get to know him. Everyone will wish him well in the opportunities that are now opening out before him. In the years just before the war he threw much energy and enthusiasm into the work. He did vital service in his own chapel at Withy Grove (Allied, now Kemsley, Newspapers), particularly in securing the closed shop. One of his Manchester admirers told the A.D.M. that at the war's beginning, " when other branches and chapels ran away, Finnemore did more than anyone else to rally the troops. He was the only man in Birmingham who lost his job for obeying the instructions of his Union in the General Strike. He was always in favour of a forward policy, but never a rash one." These are the qualities of leadership.

There are innumerable bits of news in this war period which have found no place here and to rescue a few I will put them in the familiar form of News in Brief:

Members of the N.E.C. were insured by the Union against death and injury by enemy action.

More than once Central London Branch continued its business within sound of falling bombs.

Many refugee journalists from the enemy occupied countries of Europe joined the Union.

A War Emergency Committee was at once appointed because of the difficulty of getting members of the Administrative Committee together from all parts of the country.

For consultation with the membership as early as possible the N.E.C. convened the A.D.M. of 1940 in January instead of Easter, the customary time of meeting.

In 1942 the result of a vigorous campaign was that the Union obtained a total of 88 offices with both " closed shop " and 100 per cent. membership. The campaign continues.

At the outbreak of war the head office was moved to a cottage at Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, where the staff could work with as little interruption as possible. In view of the long immunity of Central London from air attack work has now been resumed in the London Office.

By ballot in 1941 it was decided to continue the unemployment levy at 3/- per month (making the total contribution 9/6), the alternative of 2/6 being rejected by a big majority.

For the first time, this year the editor of the *Journalist* made a report to A.D.M. Another recent innovation was the appointment of an Executive Advisory Committee to assist the editor.

Young members in the Forces have appreciated the correspondence courses arranged by the Education Committee. At home all summer school scholarships offered were taken up last year.

One member who had been a branch official and was incapacitated by grave illness for years, received over £1,200 from Union funds and his widow was also helped.

"Blacking," which caused trouble in the Great War, appeared again. In default of proper payment the N.E.C. promised to support members who refused to do it.

When Coventry was bombed continuously for 11 hours on a night early in 1941 journalists did their work in amazing circumstances. In other cities which endured and withstood the blitz newspaper staffs heroically stuck to their duty, though in many cases offices were smashed and burned.

Union totals of members in the Services—N.U.J. 2,746; T.A. 11,889; Natsopa 9,441; L.S.C. 5,492; Press telegraphists 100; Society of Lithographic Artists, etc., 3,120; Printing Machine Managers 1,032; Electrotypers and Stereotypers 1,460; Monotype Casters 195; Correctors of the Press 191. These totals are only approximate and were issued in March, 1943.

When work in Fleet Street was seriously retarded by the suspension of all operations at the sounding of the sirens it was arranged to continue work until roof spotters gave warning of imminent danger, thus defeating the intention of nuisance raiders to paralyse industry. The Unions agreed, on compensation being made for death and injury. For this purpose the N.P.A. set aside £200,000, to be administered by a joint committee of proprietors and unions. It was all subject to the voluntary decision of the workers to continue after the sirens sounded.

EPILOGUE.

THE long tale is ended. If it truly reveals hopes, triumphs and failures, well. Still better if the younger ranks, profiting by the record, don the badge of the Crusader. The story is a challenge to the youth of the Union. Sir William Harcourt once made this comment at an Oxford Union debate: "There is nothing more interesting to an old stager like myself than to see the two year olds run." I feel very much like that as I conclude this history. If our leaders of to-morrow gain inspiration and courage from it that will be my best reward.

Big tasks lie ahead. Movement will be faster as the doctrine of the "inevitability of gradualness" gets out of date. To-day the Union is preparing for journalism after the war; the re-instatement of our Service men and their economic well-being; the provision of educational and vocational facilities for those who are coming on.

When the war ends the old problem of hours and holidays will demand action, the employers having promised to make an agreement in the year after hostilities cease. A research group has been gathering information on the finance and economics of the newspaper industry, and an *ad hoc* committee is considering the post-war situation. Long before the war close attention was given to the menace of Fascism to the liberty of the Press, and a committee of inquiry on the functions of journalism in a Socialist State presented a preliminary report, necessarily vague and inconclusive. This is not surprising seeing that the Labour Party, the chief Socialist organisation in the country, has itself no definite plans for dealing with the Press, and indeed has made no serious inquiry. The Beveridge social security scheme may affect our Approved Society and system of benefits. In all this there is scope for constructive work by the Union.

The times presage widening responsibilities for the Union. May it boldly and confidently seize every opening for improving the lot of the journalist and for the larger mission of making journalism itself a vital and worthy instrument of democratic life and progress. If our young men see visions it may be permitted to the old men to dream dreams.

LIST OF A.D.M.'s, PRESIDENTS AND GENERAL OFFICERS.

A complete list of places and dates of Annual Delegate Meetings, and the Presidents elected thereat; also of the General Officers from the beginning:

1907	Birmingham	R. C. Spencer (Manchester)
1908	Leeds	G. H. Lethem (Leeds)
1909	London	G. H. Lethem (Leeds)
1910	Manchester	G. H. Lethem (Leeds)
1911	Birmingham	J. H. Harley (London)
1912	Manchester	J. H. Harley (London)
1913	Manchester	W. T. A. Beare (London)
1914	Liverpool	F. H. Hamer (Manchester)
1915	Sheffield	F. H. Hamer (Manchester)
1916	Glasgow	E. Williams (Carlisle)
1917	Manchester	A. Martin (Sheffield)
1918	Leicester	F. J. Mansfield (London)
1919	London	J. Haslam (Manchester)
1920	Cardiff	J. E. Brown (Redhill)
1921	Newcastle	T. Jay (Bristol)
1922	Nottingham	T. A. Davies (Cardiff)
1923	Portsmouth	W. Meakin (London)
1924	Southport	T. K. Sledge (Leeds)
1925	Birmingham	T. S. Dickson (Larkhall)
1926	Edinburgh	A. J. Rhodes (Plymouth)
1927	Plymouth	H. A. Raybould (Dudley)
1928	London (Coming of Age)	F. W. Bill (Norwich)
1929	Cheltenham	H. D. Nichols (Manchester)
1930	Manchester	W. G. Mitchell (Darlington)
1931	Leamington Spa	W. Betts (London)
1932	Harrogate	J. G. Gregson (Liverpool)
1933	Newport (Mon.)	J. H. Aitken (Glasgow)
1934	Stirling	E. J. T. Didymus (Portsmouth)
1935	Southampton	R. S. Forsyth (Carlisle)
1936	Carlisle	F. G. Humphrey (Birmingham)
1937	Torquay	F. P. Dickinson (London)
1938	Brighton	E. S. Bardsley (Rotherham)
1939	Bristol	J. W. T. Ley (Newport, Mon.)
1940	Leicester	E. Hunter (London)
1941	Manchester	T. Foster (London)
1942	Leeds	D. M. Elliot (Edinburgh)
1943	London	A. Kenyon (Harrogate)

GENERAL OFFICERS.

SECRETARIES: W. N. Watts, 1907-18; H. M. Richardson, 1918-36; C. J. Bundock, 1937 (now in office).

TREASURERS: J. C. Menzies, 1907-12; G. H. Lethem, 1912-16; W. Veitch, 1916-23; T. Foster, 1923 (now in office).

TRUSTEES: 1908, E. F. Hind, J. S. Raine, H. M. Richardson; 1910, R. C. Spencer, W. B. Proudfoot, Richardson; 1912, Spencer, Richardson, W. E. M. Perks; 1913, J. H. Harley, Spencer, Richardson; 1919, Spencer, F. J. Mansfield, A. Martin; 1921, Martin, Mansfield, C. E. Turner; 1922, W. Betts, Mansfield, Turner (now in office).

EDITORS of *Journal* and *Journalist*: H. M. Richardson, 1907-18; F. J. Mansfield, 1918-20; C. P. Robertson, 1920-22; T. Jay, 1922-24; J. Haslam, 1924-37; F. G. Humphrey, 1937-41; O. Rattenbury, 1941-42; H. G. Schaffer, 1942 (now in office).

HONORARY STANDING COUNSEL: George Leach, 1907-20; G. F. L. Bridgman, since 1920.

ORGANISERS: C. J. Bundock, National Organiser 1923-37; L. A. Berry, Trade and Periodical Organiser, 1937, National Organiser since 1938; P. Fullerton-Bustard, Trade and Periodical Organiser since 1938.

FLEET STREET AND THE GALLERY 50 YEARS AGO.

Three documents are here presented.

First the report of an Investigation Committee appointed by the Central London Branch in 1913. Owing to the prejudice against inquisitions, and the apathy which at that early stage largely prevailed, the results of the inquiry were meagre, but a summary is worth preserving as giving some picture of conditions in Fleet Street which the Union had to face.

Secondly an individual memorandum on conditions in the 1890's in Fleet Street.

Thirdly an interesting survey of Press Gallery work compiled by the Parliamentary Branch, covering the period before, and in the first years of, the Great War, 1914-18.

CENTRAL LONDON INVESTIGATION.

I. GENERAL.

In presenting their Report on the results of their investigation into conditions of journalistic employment in the Central London area, instituted at the instance of the National Executive, your Committee have to express regret that so few of our members have assisted us by sending in filled-up inquiry forms. Of about a thousand forms sent out for members and non-members only 59 were returned, and of these only four, apparently, were from non-members. This apathy, or apparent apathy, calls for explanation. Some members thought the inquiry forms too inquisitorial—an idea proved by the forms returned to be entirely without foundation. Were it not that the queries were so exhaustive the inquiry would have lost much of its value. Others objected that they did not desire to disclose their private affairs, evidently entertaining a doubt as to the confidential nature of the Inquiry. This unworthy suspicion was entirely without foundation, and, as a matter of fact, the three members of the Inquiry Committee entrusted with the scrutiny of the forms have no idea of the identity of the members who filled them up, except in regard to those which contained the names or card numbers of members. The principal reason, however, why so few forms have been sent in is of a consoling character, namely, that in respect to the great morning and evening papers the conditions of employment are satisfactory in Fleet-street. One form indicates that a close watch should be kept on a morning paper in process of re-organisation; another that the salaries on one of the oldest of the evening papers are not consistent with Fleet-street traditions and conditions and a third that the Sporting Press wants attention. Speaking generally, the forms returned, though comparatively few, combined with personal experience, provide material for a reliable and instructive estimate of the position.

DEVELOPMENTS.—Considerable changes have taken place in Fleet-street in the past fifteen or twenty years. The purely news side of the papers has been greatly developed and is still growing in importance compared with the purely editorial side. The result is a large increase in the number of sub-editors employed and also in the number of reporters, chiefly for agency work. The old free lance supplying ordinary news to the papers has practically disappeared through the development of the agencies in respect to London work. The papers are more and more relying on these agencies for routine reporting, reserving their own reporting staffs for special work of a particularly important character. This development in regard to the agencies involves a danger to which reference will be made later. As regards hours and conditions of employment, holidays, "days off" periodically, payment during illness, and considerate treatment generally, the position is on the whole satisfactory. Security of tenure is in the main good, perhaps better than it has been for many years and the existence of the N.U.J. has much to be thanked for that.

SALARIES.—In respect to salaries, too, the position is in the main satisfactory, with the exceptions indicated. There is, as a rule, no "flat" rate in newspaper offices as in the old days, nor do sub-editors and reporters

receive extra remuneration for work outside their routine duties as was the custom in some cases in the past. Taking sub-editors (excluding chiefs) salaries now range from £4 (or guineas) to £8 (or guineas), according to experience, individual merit, or specialisation. Reporters on the daily and evening papers of the best class are practically on the same scale, though in this category, special men who have earned a deserved reputation as "stylists" may go to £10, £12, or even £15 per week.

WARNING TO PROVINCIALS.—This may seem a very satisfactory state of things, and a state of things calculated to whet the ambition of provincial journalists. But it is only relatively satisfactory. In recent years there has been no advance in salaries commensurate with the increased cost of living, and having regard also to high rents and travelling expenses peculiar to London, there is in the end little material advantage in working in Fleet-street compared with the principal centres in the provinces. Indeed, as regards reporters especially, it is questionable if the country, with lower cost of living and opportunities for linage and "specials", has not the advantage in some instances. Provincial journalists should be warned that Fleet-street is not paved with gold.

THE DANGER AHEAD.—But while in the main employers are now very fair and considerate it must always be borne in mind that with the almost entire elimination of the individual newspaper proprietor and the substitution of great commercial companies and combinations, there is a growing danger of a downward tendency for all except picked men, and, what is worse, a growing temptation, becoming more acute year by year, before the eyes of employers. This is due to the following reasons in the main:

(1) The large amount of agency work formerly done by free lances. This work can to a considerable extent be done by cheap men and apparently there is no lack of them, having regard to the fact (as reported by a member) that with the exception of the two "chiefs," the whole of the London Service staff of the Press Association, according to the latest intelligence, were under the Insurance Act (meaning an income of less than £160 per annum). The London News Agency is reported upon more favourably, taking the average of the whole of its services; but the fact remains, that the system is encouraging young and ambitious men to come to London to get their "foot in" in Fleet-street.

(2) Young men coming to Fleet Street at salaries of £2 5s. 0d. or £2 10s. 0d. a week soon find that it is not a living wage, and when they get some experience they not unnaturally are anxious to secure positions on daily papers, and are willing to take positions at rates which, while seeming a great improvement to them, are far below the normal rates. This is one of the most dangerous elements we have to face.

(3) Again, young men with local knowledge sent to the London offices of provincial papers with small salaries, which may be better than what they are receiving at home, but wholly inadequate for London, are similarly on the cheap market when opportunity offers.

(4) Aspiring young men accept miserable salaries on local papers on the outskirts of London in the hope of using them as a "jumping off" ground for Fleet-street on similar lines.

These are not mere speculations. We have cases in point coming before us in increasing numbers. In the course of a few weeks we have had applications for transfers to our Branch of a man who had thrown up a good job to come to London in the hope of picking up something better, and of two men out of work who thought they would have a better chance in Fleet-street than elsewhere. We have had other cases of men working in other areas anxious (and sometimes with success) to become members of the Central London Branch in the hope of finding their way into the Fleet-street area, without being very particular as to the starting salary. These are elements of danger which cannot possibly be ignored and to guard against them would seem to be one of the first duties of the Central London Branch acting through and with the authority of the Executive.

RECOMMENDATIONS. With this end in view your Committee make the following recommendations :—

(1) That concerted action be taken to warn provincial members against coming to London papers except at normal rates of salary ; against coming on speculation ; and against accepting agency employment if such employment brings them under the Insurance Act, on the part of adults competent to do work for supply to London dailies.

(2) That if the rules of the N.U.J. do not at present allow it, they should be so altered as to empower branches like Central London to refuse to accept transfers of members taking positions at too low salaries in London and to refuse admission to membership of men who do not satisfy the branch that they have not accepted or are not receiving salaries below what are deemed the normal rate for such positions held in London.

(3) That such steps as may be advisable be taken to represent to employers now paying salaries in London which bring journalists within the Insurance Act, that the salaries be raised to the Fleet-street standard.

It is perfectly clear that if these recommendations, or something tantamount to them, are to be enforced a more thorough organisation of Fleet-street journalists is absolutely essential, so as to enable the Central London Branch to protect its members from what is really "blacklegging" within the Union.

Other recommendations arising out of the investigation are as follows :— (1) Where sub-editors are now on terms of a month's notice they should be requested to apply for a three months' notice in accordance with the legal Fleet-street custom. (2) That steps also be taken to secure a uniform custom of a half hour's supper time outside the office, to be arranged consistently with the continuity of the supply of "copy" to the printers. (3) That a special inquiry be instituted into the conditions of the Sporting Press. (4) That a special effort be made to organise workers on the Trade papers as a special section. (5) That points raised affecting "linage" (not specifically appertaining to Fleet-street) be referred to the Executive.

Only one lady journalist sent in a form. This is a branch of the profession which needs special attention in Central London. It was brought to the notice of the Committee in the course of investigation that Lord Northcliffe, recognising the arduous nature of the work of sub-editors, has increased the annual holiday from three to four weeks. This is an example which the Committee recommend for general adoption.

II. SECTIONAL REPORTS.

MORNING PAPERS. The sub-editors' returns were the completest of all and ranged from a man of 32 years of age getting £4 per week to a man of 26 getting £6 10s. per week. The latter, although the highest salary returned, is not the maximum paid. Hours, holidays, etc., are quite satisfactory. The reporters' salaries range from £2 13s. on the *Sporting Life* to £7 7s. on the *Daily News*. The former is a man of 27 years of age, 7 years in journalism, barred from linage to other papers, hours, 6 to 10 per day, and in football season, 2 hours on Sunday.

SPACEMEN. Rates paid : 1½d. line, 2d. line ; 10s. 6d. per 40 lines up to ½ col., and £1 1s. col. ordinary, £2 2s. col., special. Three spacemen specify grievances : (1) An apprentice employed for a time without salary) who got commissions to the detriment of experienced men. This is quite abnormal, as there is no apprenticeship system in Fleet-street. (2) Lack of proper arrangement as to payment of expenses on commissioned stories ; and refusal of any payment for stories "turned down." (3) Owing to drastic changes at the *Morning Advertiser* a proposal to get reporters at 50s. a week to replace men who have been paid 5 guineas and upwards. "This paper needs closely watching," says the writer. A fourth return simply says "Cannot something be arranged to enable *bona fide* free lances to become members" ? There are several such already members of the Branch.

EVENING PAPERS. Lowest £2 10s. weekly, age 23, on *Globe*; highest £7 on *Star* (leaderettes as well as reporting). One *Star* man writes "no grievances."

PROVINCIAL OFFICES IN LONDON. Three subs. and one assistant sub. send returns; salaries £1 15s. (assistant), £2 10s., £3 10s., and £4 10s. others. Hours vary from 7½-8 to 10 hours per day. One says: "9 hour day but not adhered to." Highest paid man has the best hours, and in this office (*Manchester Evening News*) the conditions are described as "excellent." Two editors on Hulton's publications (*Story Journal*, etc.), £5 per week.

AGENCIES. An examination of the London agency forms sent in leads to the following general conclusions:—(1) As regards hours and time off weekly the conditions are on the whole reasonable. (2) Salaries rule very low in some cases, one sub-editor of 25 receiving only £2 per week. (3) The tendency of the London News Agency is better than that of the Press Association not only in amount of salary but in more rapid advance. (4) The reported practice of the Press Association in encouraging men to supplement their inadequate salaries by doing outside work, such as football reports, in their own time, called for adverse comment on the part of the Committee. This is taking work away from othen journalists who may not be able to obtain full work. (5) Two sub-editors found to be on a month's notice instead of three. (This is the subject of a general recommendation).

TRADE SECTION. In submitting the report upon the inquiry forms filled up in this connection there does not appear to the Committee to be very much to complain of. The papers sent in are not nearly representative but so far as they go they do not indicate a bad state of affairs, having regard to the duties expected. Editors appear to receive from £4 to £6 10s. per week; sub-editors up to £3 10s. and reporters up to £2 15s. In regard to the two latter sections a commission is mostly paid upon commercial business obtained, which in normal cases would bring up the remuneration considerably during the year. In many cases trade journalism has a direct bearing upon business which it influences. There is one bad case to which attention ought to be drawn, the member appearing to fill the combined offices of reporter, sub-editor, and special writer. He is 67 years of age, however, and has been in journalism 51 years. His salary is only 30s. per week.

Signed on behalf of the Investigation Committee: F. J. Mansfield (Chairman of the Central London Branch), James O'Donovan (Hon. Secretary), William Palmer (Secretary, Investigation Committee).

A minority report presented by David Berry (a member of the Committee) emphasised the effect of the development of agency news services in curtailing the staffs of the newspapers and in depressing their salary standards. The agencies were the key to salaries in Fleet Street, because their low-paid men were ever ready to join newspaper staffs and their competition tended to keep salaries down. He strongly urged the advantage of gaining minimum standards of salary and hours both for agency and newspaper staffs, and said that individual merit would always command its own price above the minimum. Experience of the London Society of Compositors proved this, for in nearly all the daily offices men were paid above the Society rates, because proprietors insisted on having the best men. The establishment of minimum rates and the restriction of juniors would stop the entry of men who accepted temporary jobs at, say, two guineas a week until they could learn the work. Provincial minimum scales were also needed to prevent unfair competition in Fleet-street. "On the financial basis rests the status of the profession," concluded Berry," and if the base is rotten we can never do much good."

FLEET STREET IN THE "NINETIES."

The conditions of the staff when I joined it twenty-five years ago, and until twelve years ago, were as follows: Sub-editors and reporters £6 6s. per week minimum. Sub-editors covered day engagements frequently, and were paid extra; 10s. 6d. for a call or anything up to half-a-column; £1 1s. for anything over half-a-column; double that figure if the matter was considered of sufficient merit and importance to be set in bourgeois instead of brevier. Reporters had to cover only one engagement each day; for all engagements beyond the one in the day extra pay as above. Travelling expenses outside London were: first class railway fares and £1 1s. daily for hotel expenses.

Most of the Parliamentary staff were annuals, and in the recess they came in for sub-editing and reporting. If, during the Session, the reporters were called outside they were paid extra on above scale. Some of the Parliamentary men were "sessionals." They received £6 6s. weekly, and extras, and if there was an autumn session, their salary ran right through the recess between the early and autumn session, as if Parliament were sitting all the time. The average extras were about £150 a year to each member of the staff, so that each member of the permanent annual staff (that was, nearly all the staff) averaged about £470 a year. The scale of payment on another staff was about the same, and two others were almost as good, but not quite; salaries being the same but the extras rather less. Two other papers (named) were about the same, but with fewer extras.

There was also a memorandum from Thomas Coates, formerly of the *Daily News*, showing £7 7s. paid in the 90's and Law Courts reporters taking Gallery work at £6 6s., bringing the weekly total of some journalists to £13 13s. during the Session.

THE GALLERY.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH.

(1). The Committee was appointed "to inquire into the terms and conditions existing in all branches of Parliamentary (Press Gallery Work) and to report to the Branch" . . . (3). In what follows we deal with rates of pay arranged during peace when prices were normal. The cost of living has since risen by at least 75 per cent. and nowhere has the rise been more severe than in the food supply of the Gallery. In the absence of war bonuses the old remuneration, even if continued, has meant serious hardship for many Parliamentary journalists. What we find is, however, that in many instances extra work has dropped off, with grave results for the men affected, and we can only hope that after the war this evil will right itself. We must add that conditions on London newspapers are not always up to the best standards of the Provincial Press. In one or two cases we think that the proprietors would desire to be informed of this fact. We also wish to make it clear that we are chiefly interested as a committee in the lowest paid Parliamentary journalists, who would be affected by a minimum rate and particularly need the advice of the Union.

LOBBY.

(4) The Lobby list contains roughly 70 names, but of these about one half are merely nominal and we are only concerned with the remainder—journalists whose duties vary from those of the local paragraphist to those of the political representative of a big newspaper or agency. The latter is as familiar with Whitehall and Downing-street as he is with the Lobby itself. Wherever and whenever there is news to be obtained, whether at week-ends, in the recess, or during a sitting, he must try to get it. He has to meet public men of every rank and deal with confidences often full of delicacy. The Committee have reason to believe that among the section of Lobby representatives whose duties are as described, salaries are maintained and must continue to remain at a high level. But as regards the majority of working journalists whose duties take them

into the Lobby, the Committee are not satisfied that they have received all the information that might have been placed before them. In facing the general situation in the Lobby, the Committee are conscious of the widely different standards of work and responsibility of individuals; of the fact that the duties as regards the majority of Lobbyists are interwoven with other duties (*e.g.*, editorial responsibility, sketch writing, London correspondence and reporting) and of the difficulty of fixing a minimum for a body of journalists whose distinctiveness as a grade in Press Gallery work is founded on geographical rather than professional considerations. The representative of a small provincial paper meets the political chief of a great London daily on common ground, and the Committee suggest that it is clearly inadvisable to bring both these types within the terms of a general classification. The trend of the evidence submitted was that salaries as low as £4 4s. and as high as £16 and more a week, are paid to men who combine sketch-writing with lobbying, and that roughly £400 a year is paid to the journalist who combines sketch-writing, lobbying and London correspondence, less being paid by the poorer papers and more by the wealthier provincials.

(5). In any case no recognised Lobby correspondent permanently employed as such should receive from his newspaper less than an annual salary of eight guineas a week, this irrespective of whatever outside work he may undertake; and if in addition to the Lobby he acts as London Editor, he ought to receive at least ten guineas a week. Many Lobbyists earn a far higher salary than these; no one whose duty it is to uphold the profession in so conspicuous an arena should accept a lower figure.

(6) The number of non-transferable gallery tickets is about 200. There are 15 transferable pink tickets and the daily attendance is about 90.

SKETCH WRITING.

(7) In the case of sketch writers, as in that of the lobbyists, remuneration varies with the ability and bargaining aptitude of the individual and with the prominence given to the sketch in the particular newspaper. But no journalist should be paid less than eight guineas a week on an annual basis for this work, covering as it does both Houses; while for evening papers the absolute minimum should be 10s. 6d. a day. If a sketch writer serves two newspapers he should receive a substantially higher figure than the above.

REPORTING.

(8) During the war (i.e., after 1914) the average attendance of reporters has fallen considerably. For a time, one staff disappeared entirely, but it has now been revived to one third its strength. While, therefore, the number of staffs remain the same, the personnel has dropped to about two thirds of peace strength. Systems of payment differ widely, but more than one third of the reporters receive less than six guineas a week, while rates have been in isolated cases as low as £3 10s., though rising in other cases to eight guineas a week. There is valuable evidence to the effect that 20 years ago the sessional reporting staffs of Great London morning newspapers received from six guineas to seven guineas and eight guineas a week, with liberal payment for extra work when undertaken on half days, or at week-ends; and every consideration during the recess, when, in some cases, five guineas per week was paid, or day work provided so far as could be arranged. Several journals pensioned men of long service. The Committee are of opinion that be the staffs large or small these standards ought to be maintained. The evidence shows that a considerable change for the worse has taken place.

SESSIONALS.

(9) The system of engaging reporters by the Session, which 15 or 20 years ago was almost the general practice, is now in the main confined to three staffs although there are a few papers run on an annual basis which still retain a proportion of sessional men. Within the last decade the average salary has shown a downward tendency. Formerly the recognised practice was to pay six guineas a week on appointment; then after some

years of service to increase the pay to seven guineas and in some cases to eight guineas. Half the holiday periods at Whitsuntide and Easter were conceded to the staffs and extra work was provided and generously paid for during the session. According to one witness the system on his paper was that " at the end of the Session the sessionals were invited to put down their names on a list if they were willing to undertake work during the recess in sub-editing or reporting. Some did ; some did not. Those who did were paid by results. For sub-editing I believe the rate was a guinea per night ; for reporting £3 a column." A practice common to nearly all papers was at the end of the session to draft the sessional men into the office to perform relief sub-editing duties, and for this the pay was at the rate of five guineas a week. Generally speaking, " it was a recognised responsibility on the part of the proprietors that sessionals should be employed where opportunity offered during the recess." Extra work for other papers was freely permitted and commonly done, and in many cases the income of the sessional was 50 per cent. above the salary from his paper.

(10) The situation to-day appears to be less fortunate. The old commencing salary is the present maximum, with the exception of one man who is paid £6 16s. 6d. Owing to the growth of agencies considerably less extra work is available, and with the depletion of staffs, there is less opportunity for undertaking it. Consequently the actual loss of income is much greater than the reduced salaries represent. Though the greater number of the sessionals (who represent nearly one-third of the reporters in the Gallery) receive six guineas, several cases have been reported to the Committee where men are engaged at five guineas. Half the holiday periods are still granted. Two of the three existing large sessional staffs have guarantees of 28 weeks' salary—in one case per session and in the other case per year. No exception is as a rule taken to extra work for other papers, but the responsibility of helping sessionals to live during the recess is no longer recognised. The Committee were interested to learn that the conditions of employment on one of the sessional staffs include membership of an office pension fund, an insurance scheme, and payment of the men's income tax by the proprietors. One case was reported to the Committee of a sessional being prohibited, as a condition of employment, from undertaking extra work in the Gallery for any paper or agency. One of the three large staffs referred to pays £4 4s. per week plus 9d. per 100 words for " specials," but this basis of remuneration has existed in this case for many years and in normal times is roughly equivalent to £6 6s. per week. But the war has had a serious effect on " specials " and the men have suffered a diminution in income at the very time when, owing to the higher cost of living, they might reasonably have expected an increase of pay.

(11). The Committee are of opinion that salaries should be guaranteed for 32 weeks per annum and, whether paid weekly in a fixed amount, or partly by linage, should not fall below £6 6s. a week for a morning paper or agency. For a year this works out at a minimum of £201 12s. Every opportunity should be given for supplementing this inadequate income, and the Committee strongly disapprove of any attempt to deprive the sessional of his long established freedom to do as much extra work as he can conveniently do. They suggest that action should be taken to prevent a development of the backward tendency referred to. The Committee also believe that if immediate steps to ensure that no man should receive less than £6 6s. per week were successful, a tendency to go voluntarily beyond that minimum would soon manifest itself in connection with the better paying papers.

ANNUALS.

(12) The position of men engaged on an annual basis does not appear to have been worsened to any great extent, if at all, during recent years, and the fact that a number of sessionals have been converted into annuals may, when viewing the Gallery as a whole, be regarded as an improvement.

Two-thirds of the reporters in the Gallery are now paid all the year round. The old commencing rate for morning papers used to be £6 6s. during the session and £5 5s. during the recess, which on a 26 weeks session works out at £300 a year. Some years of service or special qualifications entitled a reporter to a higher rate, and pension prospects made a valuable consideration in appointments to certain papers. To-day one-half the annuals receive £6 6s. a week (£327 a year) or more, and the number would be greater if the Union could tactfully represent to one important London paper that "making book-keeping easier" by dropping "the odd six shillings" is for the reporter an expensive method of simplification. The Committee were informed that a leading London paper paid £5 a week to an annual in an individual instance, but the Committee feel that the case has only to be brought to the notice of the proprietor to secure the reporter £6 6s. a week as the salaries of the paper in question are on the highest scale in the Gallery. The Committee draw special attention to two cases reported to them of annuals coming within the £160 income limit of the National Insurance Act; both men have been withdrawn from the Gallery to replace men who have gone to the war from Fleet-street. There is every prospect that at the end of the war these low-paid men will return to the Gallery, and the Committee strongly recommend that at the appropriate time action should be taken to improve their position. Their consent to negotiations on their behalf should be secured if possible; but whether that can be had or not, the Committee believe that in the interests of the Gallery as a whole the proprietors should be communicated with.

(13) The Committee have learned with sympathy of the considerably lower rates current on Irish newspapers. The best paid reporters on these journals appear to receive only £214 per annum, even if the Session lasts 32 weeks, out of which must be sometimes found heavy travelling expenses and board and lodging in London. The Committee fully recognise that here is a special case, but they submit none the less that Irish newspapers ought to raise their salaries to £250 for the whole year.

(14) For evening papers with special staffs the Committee suggest an annual minimum of £300 for reporters who do a morning's work in Fleet-street for their office before finishing the day at the House in the afternoon. Although these men are free before dinner, it will be seen that they have done a full day's work. They cannot be expected to make up their incomes, if inadequate, by long hours in the evening.

(15) For extra assistance the established rates are £1 1s. for morning papers and 10/6d. for evening per diem. The Committee hold that not less than these rates should continue to be the rule, and the practice of paying "by the turn" though sanctioned by the Official Debates, is liable to abuse, and if continued, should not in the Committee's view, be advertised in a minimum schedule.

(16) In conclusion the Committee suggest that where a particular galleryman or lobbyist is working on terms which manifestly lower the rates for the profession, as represented at Westminster, the matter should be considered in confidence and an effort made with the individual's consent to remedy the deficiency of income. Moreover, it is hoped that journalists themselves will realise their duty to maintain the above standards; to accept lower salaries or rates is unfair not only to a man's colleagues but to his own health and the well-being of those dependent on him.

(17) Except in regard to paragraphs five and seven the Committee are unanimous in their findings.

A. W. GRANT (Chairman), THOS. COX MEECH, F. PRIMROSE STEVENSON, P. W. WILSON, A. MCARDLE, G. GRIFFITH.

NOVEL MANCHESTER EXPERIMENT: GUARDIAN "HOUSE SOCIETY."

An account of the "House Society" formed by the *Manchester Guardian* and *Evening News* after the General Strike of 1926, written by C. E. Turner:

The establishment after the General Strike of a "House" Society in the offices of the *Manchester Guardian* and *Evening News*, the development of the society, and its eventual and unexpected dissolution in 1941 make a short and not always happy chapter in Union history. Even had the forming of such a society not been unique in the Union's experience its very timing, when political and industrial feeling was still running high, was bound to arouse suspicion; and that was the attitude with which, in the main, the trade unions concerned greeted the proposal. Yet, but for the fact that its acceptance involved surrendering the right to strike, it would indeed have been altogether attractive in the eyes of the staunchest trade unionists. In that respect alone the scheme, with its pensions and other financial provisions, fell short of pure benevolence; but that was a condition as fundamental to the proposals as it was from the outset an obstacle to its ready adoption, even though that surrender was directly set over against the employers' undertaking not to lock out their workers, to give conditions of work in all respects equal to the best obtaining in the newspaper industry elsewhere, and to establish machinery for arbitration in any dispute which might arise. It was a condition the Typographical Association locally and nationally, never did accept—the reason why it stood aloof and even hostile throughout the experiment. And in the end the intransigence of the Typographical Association was the rock on which the society foundered.

Of the other trade unions concerned—the N.U.J., Natsopa, and the Stereotypers—our own was most reluctant to accept the society, so that it had, in fact, been established for some months before our formal and official adhesion, though a few journalists had attached themselves in the meantime. First the clerical workers, then Natsopa and after them the Stereotypers went into the Society, though not in any wholesale way until supplementary agreements had been reached with the appropriate national bodies. The essence of these agreements was that they allowed both trade union and house society membership, a condition which the promoters of the Society had not at first been willing to concede.

Most N.U.J. members within the two offices thought of these two older trade unions as having capitulated, and under the leadership notably of H. D. Nichols they continued to resist the innovation. Adhesion to the Society was openly declared to be incompatible with loyalty to the Union, acceptance of the no-strike condition to be a surrender of the first of trade unionism's hard won rights. A succession of exciting meetings with the management failed to breach the wall of solidarity that the majority of Union men presented. The few men who had joined the Society left the Union and there seemed the possibility of a widening gulf when negotiations were opened between the newspapers and H. M. Richardson, on behalf of the N.U.J. Executive. The upshot was the conclusion of an agreement similar to that which had been reached with Natsopa and the Stereotypers. It permitted dual membership and was held to reconcile conflicting interests to the extent that it was no longer an act of disloyalty for a Union man to join the Society. It has to be acknowledged, notwithstanding, that a considerable body of Union opinion in Manchester and elsewhere never came round to that view, and there were attempts all the time the Society existed to get the agreement annulled. Within the offices concerned no substantial differences ever arose between Society and non-Society N.U.J. members, who found it possible to work together in either of the two bodies. There was, however, a small but influential and lasting breakaway of N.U.J. members over an incident of Society administration after a few years' working experience. The seceders contended, and thereafter remained convinced, that the system

of safeguards which was supposed to take the place of the right to strike was not and was, in fact, not likely to prove, effective. It is not remarkable, perhaps, that the crucial no-strike requirement had no mention in the manifesto in which the directors of the two associated papers first published the Society proposals to their workers. It was implicit, but not for them the primary consideration. The document has a lasting interest beyond its immediate significance, and some of it should be put on record here.

"A Newspaper, if it is to do its duty," ran one sentence, "is an essential public service, and it is not right that this service should be constantly liable to interruption by the decision of any one of many outside bodies, mostly sitting in London and perhaps quite out of touch with both workers' and managements' views here."

Other sentences read: "We would like to modify, but also to strengthen, the organisation of our employees and to make it a forward-driving force instead of a brake. We believe this to be perfectly possible with your help . . . We do not wish, either in fact or in appearance, to weaken the collective power exercised by organised labour. But we do like to see the power exercised constructively, not obstructively. We would like to establish a warm, human, and mutually helpful relationship, and we see no means of doing this effectively on the present basis."

It was in direct reply to this manifesto that Mr. A. E. Holmes, on behalf of the P. & K.T.F. executive, issued to the employees a warning against being bought away from Union allegiance by "vague" promises. While acknowledging that the signatories to the company's manifesto had no desire to mislead, he said "nevertheless, they are mistaken in supposing that the proposed society can be made genuinely to take the place of membership of your trade unions."

Because of an article that Mr. (Sir Walter) Citrine contributed at the time to the *Typographical Circular*, Mr. J. R. Scott was drawn to answer the charge "that those who join a union such as ours are guilty of a base desertion of their fellows." The promoters of the Society, Mr. Scott said, believed in organisation for the workers, but they did not believe that the strike policy was the very essence of trade unionism. A strike arose from the failure of normal trade union policy and, like war, left a legacy of ill-will, and was generally ineffective as a method of reaching a fair and lasting settlement. By the increase of such societies as they were trying to establish, there might grow up an organisation "far more constructive and efficient than anything now existing." And the "Reply to Mr. Citrine," which was addressed primarily to members of the T.A., ended thus:

"That may be rather visionary at present, but at all events we are convinced that both we, who have always supported and shall continue to support the general principles of Trade Unionism, and you, who have been members of an old-established Trade Union, can honourably commence this common enterprise without any sense of disloyalty to old principles or anxiety lest we should be encouraging anything prejudicial to the permanent interests of the working class." These exchanges suggest the atmosphere in which the experiment was launched.

What was spoken in meetings of the workers at which the employers' original manifesto was both amplified and given a more concrete form is not on record, but one has heard that by some it was acclaimed as a new industrial evangel and was received with a mildly revivalistic fervour. And like revivals in other fields, it produced schisms and secessions and eventual healings and re-unions. It was not until the Society had been constituted and at work for seven months that, in April, 1927, the N.U.J. Executive signed the agreement that really cleared the way for N.U.J. members freely to join it. Those who were working in the office at 3, Cross Street, in the interval recall how serious a division had developed in Union ranks. Some years passed before some of the seceders returned to the Union fold. A very few never did return, just as some Union men never joined the Society. At no time was any pressure put on any man to become a Society member. Freedom to be either or neither was the essential right

ensured by the 1927 agreement, which was signed for the company by Mr. J. R. Scott, then the secretary, and for our Executive by H. M. Richardson. The terms of the agreement were:—

"It is agreed between the Manchester Guardian and Evening News, Limited, and the National Union of Journalists that there shall be no action on the part of the Union that would lead to an interruption of the normal production of the Company's papers, nor, on the part of the Company, to a lock-out of the Union's members. In furtherance of these objects, any dispute between members of the Union and the Company, failing settlement, shall be referred to a conciliation committee of the Joint Industrial Council, whose decision shall be binding and final, provided that in no circumstances shall the decision entail a reduction of salaries or conditions below the Trade Union standards at the time. The Terms of Reference to the Joint Industrial Council shall be mutually agreed, or, failing that, the Joint Secretaries shall be requested to draw the reference. Membership of the *Manchester Guardian* and *Evening News* Society and /or the National Union of Journalists shall be open freely to all those qualified."

There was no genuine or inevitable clash between the Society and the Union at any time within the offices concerned. Each body had its chapel, naturally with overlapping membership; the N.U.J. chapel looked after all trade union matters and almost always conducted negotiations with the management, whatever the subject. Two journalists became trustees of the Society funds, and the Society chapel appointed its representatives to the management committee, which met regularly with representatives of the company to administer the Society's affairs and to deal with all manner of domestic matters.

The chief objects of the Society were: To promote the welfare, security, and efficiency of the employees; to promote a good understanding between the Company and the employees and the settlement of all disputes between them by arbitration and other lawful means; to provide benefits of various kinds; to promote the efficient conduct of the Company's newspapers; to promote security for the rightful interest of the public in the uninterrupted service of the Company's newspapers. It was agreed that "under no circumstances shall any action be taken by the Society, its members or agents, whether by breach of contract or otherwise, calculated to hinder or prevent the normal production or distribution of the Company's newspapers." Individually or collectively, disregard of the clause meant forfeiture of all benefits. These included a non-contributory pension of £2 at 65, on which the Company was latterly spending £12,000 a year; a retiring allowance benefit which accumulated at the rate of about six guineas a year in normal times and had, for most employees, reached £60 when the Society was dissolved; various schemes of sickness pay and funeral benefit, which were on a joint contributory basis; and the right of entry to the Widows' Pension Fund, another joint contributory scheme.

This also should be mentioned—any employee of the company, receiving less than £7 a week, who was dismissed or felt aggrieved by any action of the management, had the right of appeal to a joint board under an independent chairman. Mr. J. R. Scott had occasion, through the *Journalist* in 1940, to call attention to one more important circumstance so as to forestall, as he said, "the facile criticism of those who look instinctively for a commercial motive." He had been contending that the public interest was a far more important consideration than whether Society benefits justified the abandonment of the right to strike, and that to deprive the community of expression and guidance at such a time of crisis as the General Strike was "a crime against one of the cardinal tenets of democracy." From that point he went on to say: "My father, C. P. Scott, felt this deeply, and it was to guard against a repetition of it that, at his request, I worked out this plan to prevent it. It is known that on his side he regarded his newspaper interests as a public trust, and that throughout his life he never accepted more from them than a modest working salary. Since his death that principle has been established

and given legal form." He also said on that occasion that after thirteen years experience he did not think there was much wrong with the method devised in 1926 for ensuring that so important a service as the press should not again be withdrawn in a national emergency.

In June, 1941, a letter was sent to the members of the House Society, through its general Secretary, Mr. Charles Whitmore, announcing that the directors found themselves under the painful necessity of giving the stipulated six months' notice to end the agreement under which the Society was constituted in 1926, and so to revert to the more usual trade union conditions. " It will have been clear to all who thought about it," the letter opened, " that for some time past there has been an increasing danger of temporary or total stoppage owing to enemy action. This has been the subject of most serious consideration, but it has not been found possible to equip an adequate alternative plant. It has also become increasingly clear that no help could be given from other newspaper offices because of trade union rules. Both the newspapers and the livelihood of all those employed by them might be destroyed at one blow. The risk is grave, and it is greater in our opinion than we are justified in incurring. The main difficulty, of course, arises from our position with the T.A. It will be remembered that shortly before the war (1936) we made considerable efforts to reach an accommodation with them, but that negotiations broke down owing to the unfavourable result of the ballot taken. Since that time it has been reported to us that the T.A. would be unready to consider again an arrangement which involved the settlement of disputes by any method outside the normal trade union practice. To accept that position is clearly a step of very grave importance, as it destroys the whole basis of the Manchester Guardian and Evening News Society. The Directors, however, have come to the conclusion that it is the only wise, and indeed for them the only possible, course in face of the growing danger and their responsibility for the existence of the papers and the livelihood of their staffs, and they have informed the T.A. that it is their intention to revert to the position of a normal T.A. house."

Set in the circumstances of the time it is no exaggeration to say, as in fact it was said, that the wholly unexpected decision of the directorate inflicted on the moral plane as much damage at 3, Cross Street as an enemy high explosive bomb had done on the material plane in a neighbouring printing establishment. Nothing in the Society's fifteen years' existence did more to disturb good will and understanding. Those who had worked most closely with the management in administering the Society's affairs had no inkling that in the thick of the war such a domestic high explosive was about to be dropped; and it made it no less a bomb when it fell that a year later considerable parts of the Society fabric and of the pecuniary benefits had been salvaged, while something of the former sense of trust and goodwill had been restored. But the Society as such, and as it had functioned for fifteen years, had become a casualty of the war.

Before the six months' notice had expired all those eligible had taken up Typographical Association membership on terms mutually arranged; and with the opening of 1942 the several trade unions concerned had returned to their pre-1926 status in the offices at 3, Cross Street. The right to strike had been restored and with it the employers' right to lock out. The non-contributory pension scheme and the joint-contributory widows' pension fund remained, though both in modified form. In all the negotiations, continuing over a year, by which some parts of the benefits were preserved, the editorial chapel of the Society played a leading part with greater keenness than it had ever shown in the everyday conduct of the Society; and its members continued an active and direct interest in administering the new and less expansive agreements that were eventually reached.

SUPERANNUATION FUND.

The following outline of the history of the Superannuation Fund is contributed by E. J. T. Didymus:

Superannuation first began to emerge as a problem of vital interest to the Union about 1918, but it was not until every possibility of a joint scheme with the proprietors had been exhausted that the National Union of Journalists' Superannuation Fund, Ltd., was established as a voluntary fund and registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies' Act, on July 10, 1925. The idea appears to have been first mooted at an "unofficial" District Council meeting, held in Bristol in February, 1918, and attended by representatives of the Bristol, Bath, Taunton, Swindon, and Gloucestershire Branches. At that meeting the Bath Branch were pledged to put a motion on the A.D.M. Agenda instructing the N.E.C. to prepare a superannuation scheme, and Gloucestershire sent Walter Ansell for the first time as its delegate to Leicester to support it. During the following year, enquiries were made into the possibilities of a scheme, but the opinion of many then was that the membership of the Union was too small for a successful superannuation society to be established. Many members were still in the Services and demobilisation after the Great War had yet to come. At the 1919 A.D.M. it was reported that an insurance company had offered to provide annuities at a reduced rate if 1,000 Union members would join. In July of that year, W. Veitch, the General Treasurer, outlined a scheme in the *Journalist* and asked members willing to participate to fill up a form. Only about 20 out of a membership of something like 4,000 responded, and the idea, of course, was abandoned. In 1922, the N.E.C. was authorised to approach the newspaper proprietors with a view to a joint contributory scheme; if that failed, the alternative was a scheme for the Union alone. The Newspaper Society had to face the serious obstacle of its inability to force dissenting proprietors into a scheme, and the Union had its own problems in regard to the free lances and men unemployed for long periods, because any scheme of superannuation must involve the continuous payment of contributions.

At the 1923 A.D.M. it was announced that a scheme prepared by an actuary had been presented to the Newspaper Proprietors' Association and the Newspaper Society. The former replied that it was impossible to set up a national scheme as many offices already had their own funds which could not be merged. The Newspaper Society also rejected the idea of a joint scheme, and the Union was left to go ahead on its own. Veitch had all along contended that nothing but a compulsory Union fund would do, and following the breakdown of the negotiations with the proprietors a ballot was taken in 1923 on the question of establishing a compulsory scheme. The voting was 1334 in favour and only 405 against, but although the dissentients represented less than 10% of the membership of the Union at that date the N.E.C. considered the voting to be so inconclusive that they declined to proceed. One of the arguments against compulsion was that any addition to the contribution might affect building up the Union into a strong and effective organisation. It was decided at the 1924 A.D.M. to prepare a "self-contained voluntary scheme" in the event of the final refusal of the proprietors to join. The year 1925 was the time of decision. The A.D.M. was bitterly disappointed at the adverse attitude of the employers, and so the Union's voluntary superannuation scheme was adopted, according to the records, "with enthusiasm." The prime movers had been W. Meakin (who became the first Chairman of the Fund), W. Ansell (a constructive critic of early proposals), and E. J. T. Didymus (now President of the Fund) who, with H. M. Richardson, drafted the original rules and put forward a number of new constructive proposals which were incorporated by the Actuary and subsequently adopted in several instances by the insurance companies. Most of the leading companies had, in fact, been asked to submit their own schemes to the N.E.C., but their terms were not so attractive as those which the Union itself was able to place before its membership, largely owing to the fact that in the Union scheme many of the usual

"overheads" of the insurance companies were eliminated and only 5% of the income was spent on administration.

In spite of the fact, however, that 1334 members had voted in 1923 for a compulsory scheme, the attitude of the membership towards the Fund remained curiously apathetic, and when Didymus became President in 1931, the membership was still only 222. A vigorous propaganda campaign was initiated, in which all the members of the Management Committee joined, but still by the opening of 1942 the membership had only reached 342 members holding 1329 units. The Union scheme was of a most flexible character, making provision for almost every contingency; even for the co-operation of the employers, and the peculiar circumstances of journalists who move frequently from place to place. Incidentally, after the Union scheme was launched, the Newspaper Society eventually produced a scheme of its own which was based on a variable premium for a fixed pension as opposed to the Union's more pliable scheme of a 5s. unit per month for a variable pension. The Newspaper Society scheme, like that of the Union, was of a voluntary nature, and was therefore only adopted by a limited number of offices, but in the hope of making both schemes more effective the Management Committees of both organisations got together to discuss the prospects of amalgamation. It was found, however, that no further step could be taken without the dissolution of the N.U.J. Fund, and regretfully the negotiations had to be abandoned.

At its inception the N.U.J. Superannuation Fund, Ltd., was able to offer a member who entered at the age of 20 an annual pension of £24 16s., or a cash option of £275 15s., after paying a total of £120 at the rate of 5s. a month. This was for a single unit, and, of course, a member could take up any number of units. Similarly, a member joining at 35 would pay £75 by the age of 60, and would get a pension of £10 17s. or a cash option of £120 17s. for each unit. The age limit for joining is 55 years, and the usual rebate is allowed by the Inland Revenue on individual premiums. The Fund is subject to quinquennial valuations, which in its early days all showed a surplus, but the winds of adversity began to blow in 1933, when, by a clause in the Finance Act, primarily designed to bring the reserve funds of co-operative societies into taxation, Parliament swept away the exemption from tax hitherto enjoyed by the N.U.J. Superannuation Fund. At that time the Fund had a surplus of £1,033. Although the matter was vigorously taken up by the Management Committee at the time, it was found impossible to get relief, and consequently fresh tables were provided for new entrants and registered in September, 1935, under which the pension payable at the age of 60 for a member who entered at the age of 20 was reduced to £22 8s., and the cash option to £245 4s., while the pension for a member entering at 35 was reduced to £10 6s. and the cash option to £112 19s. These alterations, however, still left the Society in a very favourable position compared with the corresponding benefits then being offered by insurance companies. Also in 1935, in order to improve the revenue position, the Management Committee Fund introduced a house purchase scheme, under which mortgages were offered to members at 4½%, on easy repayment terms.

Slow but sure progress was also being made in every direction, when the war broke out. The call-up of members for the Services produced the Fund's first war-time problem, but immediate arrangements were made by the Committee of Management to enable members who found themselves in difficulties to suspend their contributions during the war, without prejudicing their membership of the Fund. Quite a number were helped in this way. The increase in income tax, however to 10s. in the £, struck a serious blow at the Fund, because it materially reduced the income from investments and the Actuary reported that as a result the Fund would be faced in its future commitments with a deficency of over £22,500. In June, 1941, after considerable correspondence, Didymus, accompanied by D. M. Elliot, C. J. Bundock, and C. J. Cook (Finance Officer), met the Chief Inspectors of the Superannuation Funds and Insurance Companies at Llandudno, and the whole position was fully

explored. The Inland Revenue authorities were most helpful, but made it clear that under existing legislation the exemption from tax originally enjoyed by the Fund could not be restored. As a result of the interview, however, the tax was pegged back to 7s. 6d. in the £—a concession also enjoyed by the insurance companies—and a substantial repayment was also obtained of tax already paid. Further interviews followed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Treasury officials, and it was urged that the injustice done to the Fund in 1933 should be removed by an amending clause in the Finance Act, 1943.

For the first time in the history of the Union, Didymus and Bundock, with the co-operation of the Parliamentary Branch, met Union Members of Parliament in the House of Commons, with a view to enlisting their support. Hector McNeil, in the Committee stage of the Bill, moved an amendment to restore to voluntary superannuation funds registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies' Act, the exemption they originally enjoyed before the Finance Act, 1933, but the Chancellor, while sympathetic, intimated that it was not possible to accept a clause which would make permanent an alteration in the law. At the same time he promised to go further into the matter between then and the Report stage of the Bill. The intervening negotiations, however, again proved fruitless, and at the Report stage McNeil put down a further amendment, which had a good backing in the House, asking that exemption should be given from the tax on investment income relating to those members who made contracts between the initiation of the Fund in 1925 and 1933, when the new regulation enabling the reserves of co-operative societies to be taxed was introduced. The Chancellor again stated, however, that he was unable to amend the law and make it retrospective, as there might be claims from other societies which had lost their exemption as a result of the 1933 decision. He stated, however, that he was anxious to help if he possibly could, and that if the Society would change its practice regarding benefits and pay pensions instead of lump sums, he would see that full facilities were afforded for further discussions on the matter. Recently the Committee of Management took their own steps, and in accordance with the rules instructed the Actuary to prepare further tables to meet the new situation. The leading insurance companies were also asked to submit terms for taking over the Fund, in order to put before the membership the alternatives of carrying on with reduced benefits, making a deal with the companies, or winding up the Fund. That is the position as this is written.

APPENDIX V

Since its establishment the Union has paid to its members over £200,000 in benefits. This total is for the period to the end of 1942, and is made up as follows :—

	£
Unemployment Benefit	95,987
Special Unemployment Fund	11,125
Victimisation Pay	8,540
Benevolent Fund	33,557
War Distress Fund	13,759
Widow and Orphan Fund	43,248
Death Benefit Fund	2,815
Total	£209,031

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